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THE BYZANTINE-ARAB CHRONICLE (938-1034)
OF YAHYĀ B. SAʿĪD AL-ANTĀKĪ. (VOLUMES I AND II)

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THE BYZANTINE-ARAB CHRONICLE (938-1034)

OF YAḤYĀ B. SA^CĪD AL-ANTĀKĪ

Volume I

by

John Harper Forsyth

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of the requirements for the degree of
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NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

Transliteration into English in a dissertation concerning a topic and geographical area such as this one deals with raises numerous problems. Consistency has been the goal as far as was possible.

I have used the Library of Congress systems for Arabic and Russian. In the case of Arabic, however, for words which appear in Webster's

such as amir (for amīr), vizir (for wazīr), imam (imām) and sultan (for sultān), I have used the common English form.

In the case of Russian transliteration, I have not included the supra-linear loops used to show that various combinations of letters combine to form individual letters as there is no convenient mechanical way to reproduce the loops.

In transliterating Greek names, I have preferred the Greek forms to the Latinized forms frequently used although I have used the Latin form occasionally where it seemed most appropriate.

Place names were a particular problem as numerous towns and cities have as many as three and even four names,

Greek, Arabic, Armenian, and modern Turkish. In general, but not always, I have tried to use the transliteration of the nationality which ruled the place in question in the period which this dissertation covers.

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are employed in this dissertation.

A. H.	Year of the Hijra (Muslim chronology)
Arm. E.	Armenian era (chronology)
b.	ibn, i.e., the son of
B	Byzantion
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
DOP	Dumbarton Oaks Papers
JA	Journal Asiatique
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society
JESHO	Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient
PO	Patrologia Orientalis
REB	Revue des études byzantines
ZDMG	Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

The historical chronicle of Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd al-Antākī is the most prominent literary evidence to the flourishing and diverse relations which existed between medieval Islam and Christian Byzantium. Although religious antagonisms planted the seeds of conflict, the rival civilizations enjoyed numerous political, commercial, and intellectual contacts. Relations may have been unusually friendly during the lifetime of Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd. He was on the verge of manhood in the year 1000 when Byzantium concluded an armistice--with the Egyptian Fātimid dynasty--which brought its last major war with an Arab-ruled state to an end.

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd was born an Orthodox Christian in Egypt in about 980. He left Egypt in 1014-1015 to take refuge from religious persecution at Byzantine Antioch where he remained until his death which occurred in 1066 or shortly thereafter.

His chronicle of the years 324-425/936-1034 is a precious historical record for at least three reasons. First, little eleventh century Arabic historical writing

has been preserved, and what has survived has usually been abridged and incorporated into the works of subsequent authors. Second, Yahyā's statements are to an exceptional degree factual and objective. Third, he chose to write on subjects otherwise universally ignored. He is an unrivalled source for Byzantine-Arab political relations and an important one for the mysterious caliphate of al-Ḥākim, the position of the Christian minorities in Islamic lands, the origins of the Druze religion, and certain aspects of Byzantine internal history.

Yahyā composed his chronicle as a continuation of the Nazm al-Jawhar by the Alexandrian patriarch Eutychius (d. 940) whose name is alternatively given as Sa^cīd b. Bitrīq. He was dissatisfied with the quality of the earlier chronicle and improved upon it in his continuation. Unfortunately, his chronicle, as a continuation of the Nazm al-Jawhar, has no other title but "Continuation" (Ta'rīkh al-Dhayl), by which it shall be designated here. Yahyā, as a contributor to a separate Orthodox Christian (malikī or Melkite) tradition of historiography, was excluded from the major Islamic chronicle traditions of the period, both the Baghdad Reichschronographie and the local Egyptian Muslim tradition of historiography.¹

Yahyā b. Sa^cīd's style of writing history is distinctly individual. He neither follows the strict annalistic pattern of the Reichschronographie, rigidly placing

events under the year they took place, nor shares the concern exemplified in the Egyptian local tradition for the biographies of prominent individuals, especially rulers. Drawing inspiration from both Byzantine and Arabic traditions, he has instead developed a reliable historical methodology on his own. This achievement reveals him as a person of considerable innovativeness as well as intellectual acumen. Without exaggerating the picture--Yahyā was far from being a Thucydides or Ibn Khaldūn--his chronicle has many praiseworthy and original elements which make it a highly dependable source and a repository of original information. Not the least of these elements is a religious tolerance foreign to most medieval historiography, although not without parallel in Arabic historiography.

The geographic scope of Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's "Continuation" is relatively limited but realistic. In the main it treats events in Syria, Egypt, and the eastern zones of the Byzantine Empire. However, it deals sporadically with the different subject areas. Thus, in the case of Egypt, what Yahyā has to say about the Ikhshīdīd period is relatively scanty, but he supplies much relevant information for the reign of al-Mū^Cizz (359-365/969-975), the first Fātimid caliph in Egypt. The case of al-^CAzīz (365-386/975-996) and his son al-Hākīm (386-411/996-1021) is similar. Yahyā has little to say about

al-^CAzīz--and what he does say is duplicated elsewhere and is not of great value--but the greatest amount of space concerning a single subject he devotes to the reign of al-Ḥākim. Likewise, he touches consistently on Iraqi affairs until 991 but thereafter refers only once to Iraq. North Syria and Byzantine-Arab relations across the Syrian border also absorb a great deal of his attention. He briefly mentions Bulgaria, Armenia, and Georgia in the context of Byzantine affairs. The tenures in office of the patriarchs of Constantinople, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria he gives throughout. The whole "Continuation" is modest in length, taking up just 183 pages in the only complete edition.²

The following chapters will deal with several of the most important problems associated with Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's "Continuation." After reviewing the available biographical data on the author in this chapter, we shall turn in Part I of the dissertation to the question of his sources.

The fundamental research into Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's biography and sources was carried out by Viktor Romanovich Rozen (1849-1908), one of the fathers of Russian oriental studies, in a large volume published nearly a century ago, Emperor Basil Bulgaroctonus, Excerpts from the Chronicle of Yahyā of Antioch.³ His is the only book or monograph devoted to Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd to date. As its title shows,

Rozen's book, originally his doctoral dissertation, is principally an investigation of the Byzantine aspects of his "Continuation." It includes sixteen excerpts from the chronicle falling within the reign of Basil II (975-1025) and Constantine VIII (1025-1028) as well as an account of the Byzantine capture of Edessa during the reign of Romanos III Argyros (1028-1034);⁴ Rozen translates these excerpts into Russian and provides a detailed and creative commentary on them. These were the first published parts of the chronicle. To these excerpts Rozen added an introduction, which included chapters on previous European knowledge of Yahyā, the manuscripts, Yahyā's biography and his sources as well as a survey of the chronicle's contents and characteristics. Although the existence of his continuation of Eutychius was known to a few European Arabists before Rozen, he was the actual discoverer of the chronicle and pointed out its importance to the scholarly world.

The following study of Yahyā's biography reviews Rozen's conclusions and assumptions, which have for the most part been confirmed by evidence that has surfaced since Rozen's time. Moreover, Rozen's valuable work still serves as the point of departure for any further study of Yahyā's biography and his Greek sources.

In Chapters 2 and 3 of Part I four of Yahyā's Arabic sources are definitely identified for the first time

by means of an intricate comparison of texts. In Chapter 4 the single previously identified Arabic source as well as Yahyā's Greek and possibly Syriac sources are discussed. The choice of sources sheds light on the materials which he had available to him in composing his chronicle and on his technical acumen in making use of these materials. It also illustrates the relationship of the "Continuation" to other historical writing of the period. This last is an important question for the modern student engaged in writing the history of the era.

Part II includes a chapter on Yahyā's treatment of the controversial reign of the Fāṭimid caliph al-Ḥākim (386-411/996-1021) and a chapter which concentrates on the most important historiographic questions concerning the "Continuation."

Al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Illān, the third Fāṭimid caliph of Egypt, received an extremely bad press from the medieval chroniclers, and most modern historians have followed their lead. Although Yahyā b. Saʿīd is among those who denigrate al-Ḥākim, some of his statements expose laudable features of the Caliph's regime. His attempts to resolve the problems posed by al-Ḥākim's contradictory and often bizarre deeds furnishes the most revealing glimpses into Yahyā's personal views and intellectual abilities.

An historiographic analysis of the "Continuation" forms the sixth chapter. Here the importance of the

various historiographic tendencies and inspirations affecting Yahyā will be weighed in the hope that through a heightened knowledge of the method and technique of one medieval chronicler, our acquaintance with medieval historiography will be enriched. It is principally as a contribution to the twin fields of Byzantine and Islamic historiography, both grievously neglected, that this dissertation is intended.

Part III of the dissertation is a detailed survey of Byzantium's foreign policy toward its eastern neighbors during the reign of Basil II, 975-1025, focusing on the development of the interrelationships of Constantinople with the major and minor Muslim and Caucasian dynasties. It is included in this dissertation, which otherwise emphasizes historiographic issues, to provide factual information on Yahyā's treatment of these relations, for which he is the single most important source. No up to date study of these relations is available elsewhere. In Part III then Yahyā b. Sa^cīd becomes a secondary character, and the actual development of historical events becomes the principal object of inquiry.

* * * * *

Yahyā's biographical remarks are almost entirely confined to the brief introductory statement he makes to his continuation of Eutychius' chronicle. This statement

permits some acquaintance with the chronicler and his intentions.

In the name of God, the beneficent,
the merciful.

The book which Yahyā b. Sa^cīd al-Antākī
composed as a sequel to the history of
Sa^cīd b. Bitrīq [Eutychius].

My goal in this book is to recall all the
information of past events which has come to
me and rings true and all that has happened
from the point where the history of Sa^cīd b.
Bitrīq, Patriarch of Alexandria, concluded
until this time of ours in the intention of ful-
filling my due obligation to him who charged me
with its composition and compilation and who
has stimulated me to gather and arrange it.
May God preserve and protect it from what he
fears.

In truth Sa^cīd b. Bitrīq concluded his
history in the fifth year of the caliphate of
al-Rādī, that is the three hundred twenty-
sixth year of the caliphate [A.D. 937-938],
and he died in the three hundredth twenty-
eighth year. I will indicate the day and the
month of the year in which he died in its place
in this book of mine, and I will arrange this
according to the manner in which he arranged
it, and I shall follow the same procedures he
followed. I shall mention the names of all
the caliphs and kings whose names I have
learned and the length of the reign of each of
them. To that I shall add everything which
has come to me of their acts, conduct, and the
events that took place in their times. In this
I will avoid long-windedness in expression
and concision in summarization; I shall follow
the middle between the two ways. Actually,
people aspire more to knowledge of events closer
in time and have greater desire for it.

I will mention in it the names of the patriarchs of Alexandria, Jerusalem, Antioch, and Constantinople and their tenures in their sees just as [Sa^Cīd b. Bitrīq] did in his history, and [mine] will be a separate book added to his book.

As for the Roman patriarchs, their names have not come to me with accuracy, and, in fact, Sa^Cīd b. Bitrīq the Patriarch mentioned them uninterruptedly from Peter, the leader of the apostles, until Agapios during whose patriarchate took place the sixth council of the 289 [patriarchs] in Constantinople in the time of the Emperor Constantine b. Constans, the Emperor of the Byzantines, in the days of the caliph Yazīd b. Mu^Cāwiya b. Abī Sufyān. He did not indicate who came after him, and he mentioned in the second half of his book that, "The names of the Roman patriarchs since the death of the patriarch Agapios have not come to us nor news of them since that time until that when I composed this book." Agapios continued being mentioned in the diptychs from the convention of the sixth council until after the death of the patriarch Sa^Cīd b. Bitrīq during a long period, the extent of which has not been calculated. After him was mentioned the name of another patriarch, Benedict. His name continued to be mentioned in the diptychs until A.D. 393(-9)/[1002-1009]. After this Benedict there was a number of patriarchs, but the name of not one of them was inscribed or mentioned in the countries of Egypt and Syria because of the interruption of news of them and the distance of their country; they were content to mention the deceased Benedict.

In our time they have placed over it a patriarch named Yūhannā, and they raised up his name and let drop that of the deceased Benedict. This is the cause which prevented recording their names and the reason for omitting mention of them.

I composed this book for him who commissioned me with its composition, and after that histories came into my hands of which I was unaware when I

began preparing it. I altered it completely and rearranged it and recomposed it. Then again, after I changed my residence to the city of Antioch in A. H. 405[1014-1015], I re-examined it. There came into my hands other histories, and I extracted from it what I have augmented and added to, and I changed some of it, and I have decided the matter, following this text. I wished to point this out, so that if other variant manuscripts are found, the reason may be recognized in this. I had intended also to improve the history of Sa^Cīd b. Bitrīq, and I have come across in it events which he concealed and disregarded. I would alter in it what came to him in distorted form and he did not know with certainty and led him to inaccuracy. I realized this would be prolonged and would necessitate extending the book and altering its contents, and I have abandoned [my intention].

Before beginning to compose this book I examined a number of manuscripts of that of Sa^Cīd b. Bitrīq, and I have found some of them which include the history up to the deposition of al-Qāhir from the caliphate, that is, the year in which Sa^Cīd b. Bitrīq became patriarch of Alexandria, but others have additions, which are not in the original manuscript, by the continuator of the book. I have seen the original manuscript itself and other manuscripts of the book besides it, and its contents end at the caliphate of al-Rāḍī, that is A.H. 326. I have composed this book following this particular manuscript because it is the most complete in exposition and the closest of them in time [to the author]. I believe that the cause of the imperfections at the end of some of these manuscripts and their deficient grasp of what is in the original manuscript is that the book was copied at different times during the life of the author. Its text became widespread in the hands of the people, and each of the manuscripts was maintained in its totality, carrying the history until the time in which it was written. I am

reliant here on the last chapter of the manuscript which is the most complete and perfect, and I will make what I have written follow it, praying the aid of the Lord, requesting from him that he grant success to what I contemplate and intend, and he is [my] leader in his grace and forbearance.⁶

In short, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd says of himself that an unnamed individual commissioned him to write a continuation of the world chronicle of Sa^Cīd b. Bitrīq, also known as Eutychius, the Melkite patriarch of Alexandria, and that he wrote and rewrote the continuation before his emigration to Antioch in 405/1014-1015; he composed a third draft when he arrived in Antioch. Each time that Yahyā recast his composition, it was because he had come upon new sources previously unavailable to him.

V. R. Rozen was able to supplement considerably the scanty details which Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd himself provided. According to Rozen, Yahyā was a Melkite Christian and relative of the patriarch Eutychius, whose chronicle he continued. He was born in the late 970's, Rozen guessed, calculating that he must have been about thirty-five to forty years old at the time he migrated to Antioch. He lived there until 458/1066 at least. By profession he was a doctor. Rozen deduced that he must have written the first draft of his "Continuation" after the year 1003 and probably before the end of 1008; therefore the second redaction must have fallen between 1008 and 405/1014-1015. Rozen proposed that the actual chronicle did not end in 417

(or 418)/1027-1028, as did the two manuscripts available to him, but that it continued up to 458/1065-1066. Yahyā's decease probably fell in that year or soon after.⁷

Some of the assumptions on which Rozen based his conclusions must be partially modified in light of subsequently published sources, while many of Rozen's statements have been verified. Let us then examine how Rozen came to his conclusions.

Rozen began with the only relevant date Yahyā b. Sa^cīd gives for his personal life, that of his migration to Antioch in 405/1014-1015. Ibn Abī Uṣaybi^ca, the author of the 'Uyūn al-Anbā' fī Ṭabaqāt al-Atibba', a biographical dictionary of doctors, stated in a biography of Eutychius that Yahyā b. Sa^cīd had been a relative of Eutychius and continued his history.⁸ Yahyā's kinship with Eutychius indicates that he was probably a native of Egypt. An Egyptian origin would also explain why Yahyā migrated to Antioch in 405/1014-1015. The preceding year al-Ḥākim, who had afflicted Egyptian Christians with a whole series of anti-Christian ordinances, in a moment of remorse permitted Christians as well as Jews to emigrate from Egypt to the Byzantine empire.⁹ Yahyā must have made his decision to take up residence in Antioch as a result of al-Ḥākim's edict permitting emigration. Finally, the outlook and position of the author of the "Continuation" in respect to the events he narrates bespeaks his Egyptian

origin. For instance, the reign of al-Hākīm occupies a remarkably long section of the chronicle, between one-third and one-fourth of its total length.

Yahyā b. Sa^cīd belonged to the Melkite or Chalcedonian confession of the Eastern church, the only orthodox one in Byzantine eyes. In addition to the explicit statement of ^cAmr b. Mattā, a fourteenth century Nestorian writer, and Yahyā's blood relationship to Eutychius, a Melkite, he demonstrates his Melkite affiliation by the constant attention he gives the Melkite patriarchs in the Arab lands while ignoring the Jacobites and Nestorians.¹⁰

Rozen believed that Yahyā was approximately thirty-five or forty years of age at the time he emigrated to Antioch. He based this conclusion on the proposition that he must already have enjoyed a considerable intellectual reputation at the time he was entrusted with the completion of Eutychius' chronicle and that he had already drafted and redrafted the continuation before emigrating.¹¹ However, it is entirely possible that Yahyā received the commission as a result of his kinship with Eutychius. At a time when people frequently died at a young age, it would hardly have been unusual for a talented young man, moreover, a blood relative of the original author, to be entrusted with such a duty. Thus, he may have been born in 980 or after. The advantage of this change in Rozen's reconstruction of Yahyā's biography is that it reduces his

age to a more probable 86 years or less in 455/1066, the last year for which there is a reference to him.

Rozen placed the first redaction of the chronicle after 394/1003, proposing 1007 or 1008 as preferable dates. He believed that in the preface to the chronicle everything which preceded Yahyā's statement that he wrote three drafts of his chronicle came from the preface to the original draft of the chronicle. Since he mentioned in this place the papacy of a Pope John, which Rozen, taking it for that of Pope John XVIII, dated 1003-1007, he concluded that Yahyā must have written after 1003.¹² Rozen considered the terminus ad quem for the composition of the first redaction to be the death of Abū Ya^cqūb b. Anastās, which Rozen conjectured occurred in 397/1006-1007. There is now explicit evidence confirming Rozen's conjecture available.¹³ Abū Ya^cqūb b. Anastās was for several years al-Ḥākim's personal physician. Rozen claimed that there was a special bond of friendship between Abū Ya^cqūb and Yahyā; both were Christians and doctors. As proof Rozen cites Yahyā's treatment of Abū Ya^cqūb's death, which is unique in his chronicle; only in Abū Ya^cqūb's case did he place the formulaic "May God bless him" after a person's name when telling of his death. Rozen pointed out that he did not do this for his kinsman Eutychius, for any of the Melkite patriarchs, including the martyred patriarch of Antioch Christopher, or for any Byzantine emperor.¹⁴

Rozen attempted to relate the notice of Abū Ya^Cqūb's death to the first redaction of the chronicle, but the evidence he advanced in support of this contention is not entirely convincing.¹⁵ Yahyā says that in the period, actually two years and eight months, in which Abū Ya^Cqūb was al-Ḥākim's personal physician, he gained great personal influence with al-Ḥākim, even persuading him to take up wine-drinking, which the Caliph had previously banned from his dominions. This resulted in the amelioration of al-Ḥākim's medical condition and, according to Yahyā, led to a consequent improvement in political and social conditions. With Abū Ya^Cqūb's death al-Ḥākim went back to abstention from wine and reinstated the prohibition against its use. Al-Ḥākim soon relapsed into his previous erratic pattern of behavior, once again destabilizing conditions within Egypt.¹⁶

Presumably because Yahyā mentioned Abū Ya^Cqūb's death before recounting the story of his influence on al-Ḥākim, it is possible to argue that the first redaction mentioned only the death of Abū Ya^Cqūb and that the third redaction, composed in a safer time and place, was the first to tell the full story of how Abū Ya^Cqūb influenced al-Ḥākim. Although this is a mere hypothesis, susceptible neither to proof nor disproof, it is not unreasonable. However, Rozen's attempt to date the composition of the first redaction to 1007 or 1008 on the basis of this reasoning is not as firm as it might seem.

Therefore, while Rozen's assumption that the papacy of John XVIII was mentioned in the first redaction may be correct, thus establishing a terminus a quo for the original redaction of the chronicle, there is no way of establishing a terminus ad quem other than to allow a reasonable amount of time for the composition of a second redaction before Yahyā's departure from Egypt.

Rozen demonstrated that he must have continued his chronicle beyond 1027-1028, the point where the manuscripts at Rozen's disposal broke off, on the basis of two manuscript glosses concerning the Byzantine capture of Edessa in 422/1031. The glosses, from manuscripts of the chronicles of ^CAmr b. Matta and Matthew Tsigala, were nearly identical in content and cited Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd as their source.¹⁷ To answer the question how far beyond 1031 the chronicle continued, Rozen turned to Muḥammad al-Ḥamawī, the author of a chronicle, preserved in a unique manuscript now in the Asiatic Museum, Leningrad. Al-Ḥamawī stated that the history of al-Antākī concluded in 458/1066.¹⁸ It is possible now to verify al-Ḥamawī's statement, which was open to doubt on the basis of his general unreliability, from the abridgement of the chronicle of the Aleppan Muḥammad b. ^CAlī al-^CAzīmī (483-556/1090-1161). Al-^CAzīmī, who served as a source for al-Ḥamawī, wrote simply under the year 458, "The history of al-Antākī the Christian went up as far as here."¹⁹ Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd was probably a source for al-^CAzīmī's lengthy history, which has unfortunately survived only in the abridgement.

Two other considerations demonstrate the accuracy of Rozen's thesis that the chronicle must have extended beyond what the extant manuscripts preserve. In discussing the failure of armistice negotiations between the Fātimid caliph al-Zāhir (411-427/1021-1036) and Romanos Argyros (1028-1034), Yahyā states, "The correspondence between the two sides continued on this subject in the days of [Romanos Argyros] and the days of the Emperor Michael after him for three and one-half years until the affair was settled on the basis of what shall be mentioned in what follows."²⁰ Of course, the extant portion of Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's "Continuation" breaks off with the reign of Ramanos Argyros.

More evidence to the same effect is provided when Yahyā speaks of Basil II's subjugation of the Bulgars in 1018: "[Basil] married the daughters of the Bulgars with the sons of the Byzantines and the daughters of the Byzantines to the sons of the Bulgars, and he made them mingle, and in this manner put an end to the ancient grudges between them, [but] they revived among them later as we shall narrate in its place."²¹ This is, however, the final mention of Bulgaria in the extant portion of the "Continuation."

According to the biography of Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd which Ibn Abī Usaybi^Ca included in his biographical dictionary of doctors, Yahyā was still alive in 455/1063.

Unfortunately, Ibn Abī Uṣaybi^Ca did not think to make the connection, possibly because he was unaware of it, between the doctor Yaḥyā and the historian Yaḥyā whose biography of the Egyptian doctor Yūsuf al-Nuṣrānī he quoted and whom he mentioned as the continuator of the history of Eutychius.²² For this reason there remains a small grain of conjecture in his biography. Nevertheless, Rozen certainly is justified in identifying the two Yaḥyā's as one and the same. Thus, on the authority of Ibn Abī Uṣaybi^Ca, he was still living in the seventh decade of the eleventh century and could have carried his chronicle up to 458/1066 as al-Ḥamawī and al-^CAzīmī state.

Rozen concluded that Yaḥyā b. Sa^Cīd had been a professional physician. In arriving at this conclusion, he relied on one author's express statement, on the family relationship between Yaḥyā and the patriarch Eutychius, himself a doctor, and on the internal evidence of the chronicle, which displays a greater sophistication in medical areas than would normally be found among non-doctors.

^CAmr b. Matta, the Nestorian chronicler who reproduced the account of the Byzantine capture of Edessa in 1031, wrote that he took it from the history of Yaḥyā b. Sa^Cīd b. Yaḥyā the Melkite doctor.²³ Rozen then made the connection with the aged doctor Abū al-Faraj Yaḥyā b. Sa^Cīd b. Yaḥyā, whose biography Ibn Abī Uṣaybi^Ca gave. Ibn Abī Uṣaybi^Ca stated that the source of his biography

was Ibn Buṭlān's "Discourse on the reason why the expert doctors have changed the treatment of most diseases which were formerly treated with hot remedies to a cooling treatment, e.g., for plegia, facial paralysis, paresis, and others and why they violate the rules of the Ancients."

Ibn Buṭlān was a Christian originally from Iraq who arrived in North Syria in 447/1055 after spending a year in Constantinople. He passed the rest of his life alternately in Aleppo and Antioch, dying in a monastery in the latter city, 8 Shawwāl, 458/ Sept. 2, 1066. In this treatise which he wrote at Antioch in 455/1063, Ibn Buṭlān says that Yahyā is still living "in our time." He refers to him as a doctor learned in the field of medicine and especially pious and noble.²⁴ It is worthy of notice that this treatise of Ibn Buṭlān's, which deals with the introduction of cooling rather than warming methods for dealing with various types of paralysis, names Yahyā b. Sa^cīd as an early proponent of this change, another sign of his characteristic innovativeness.

In view of the traditional Middle Eastern pattern in which whole extended families follow a single profession from generation to generation, Yahyā's familial relationship to the patriarch Eutychius, who Ibn Abī Uṣaybi^ca says in his biographical dictionary was a doctor, suggests that Yahyā also was a doctor.

Rozen attached particular significance to his explanation of the caliph al-Ḥākim's strange behavior as a medical problem. Rozen remarked that Yahyā's observations revealed an unusually good knowledge of medicine and that he was unique in taking this view of al-Ḥākim.²⁵ After recounting Byzantine-Bulgarian relations in 407-408/June 1016-May 1018, Yahyā tells how al-Ḥākim let his fingernails and hair grow long and went around for long periods of time in the same black cloak matted with sweat and dust until it stuck to him. The urge to be riding about constantly afflicted him.

He described these as symptoms of a type of melancholy (mālankhūliā) originating in an ill humor that set upon al-Ḥākim in his youth, causing convulsions. Eventually this ill humor succeeded in drying out al-Ḥākim's brain.

Protracted observation made clear what was hidden to one who saw the afflicted person only casually. In describing the delusions that affect those who have contracted the disease, Yahyā went on to describe how such mālankhūliā must be treated by sitting in syrup of violet and cooling the malady with it. Then he repeated the story he had already written under A.H. 397 of how the Christian physician Abū Ya^cqūb b. Anastās prescribed wine to obtain an improvement in al-Ḥākim's condition, but he, giving up wine again, relapsed into his former behavior when Abū Ya^cqūb died.²⁶

Rozen assembled an imposing combination of evidence to support his conclusion that Yahyā was a professional physician. It was by no means unusual for an historian to have another profession than that of historian; it was more the rule than the exception. Thābit b. Sinān and Ahmad b. Muḥammad Miskawayh, two famous Iraqi historians of the tenth and eleventh centuries, also followed the profession of medicine.²⁷

Thus, the outlines of Yahyā's biography remain in most respects as Rozen reconstructed them. It is only necessary to reject as hypothetical two points: his conjecture that Yahyā was born in 980 at the latest, and therefore must have been over thirty-five years of age at the time he left for Antioch, and the assignment of the probable date for the first draft to 1007-1008.

The continuation of Eutychius's history was not Yahyā b. Saʿīd's sole literary achievement. Three theological works attributed to Yahyā b. Saʿīd al-Antākī are said to be preserved in private possession in Aleppo. These works, whose titles indicate their polemic nature, are "Treatise on the Truth of the [Christian] Religion," "Refutation of the Jews," and "Refutation of the Muslims."²⁸ Yahyā also mentions two projects which he had hoped to undertake but had given up. The first was a recasting of Eutychius's history which Yahyā abandoned due to the unacceptable increase that it would have

necessitated in the length of the original work. The second was to have been a treatise on calculating the date of Easter with a view to avoiding the disagreements which had occurred on this subject between the various Christian communities. Yahyā originally intended to insert it in his continuation of the Nazm al-Jawhar but wisely dropped the idea, once again for reasons of length.²⁹ Its inclusion would have violated the style and basic themes of the "Continuation."

The Egyptian scene in which Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd lived his early life was a quickly changing one. He was born during the reign of al-^CAzīz billāh (365-386/975-996), the second and possibly most outstanding of the Fāṭimid caliphs in Egypt. The Fāṭimid takeover in 969 was the most important event in Egyptian history since the Arab conquest. The Ismā^Cīlī movement, of which the Fāṭimids were the spearhead, was an Islamic reformist movement which represented a potential danger to the position of Egyptian Christians.

The Christians of both the Coptic and Melkite rites had retained an important role in the official and commercial life of Egypt. Their capacity to administer and their ability to perpetuate themselves in the bureaucracy made them an indispensable prop to the ruling dynasty, but their power and position was an irritant to the Muslims who made up a majority of Egypt's population. One of the popular criticisms against the Ikhshidīds was that they

had tried to fuse the Egyptian population together to produce a happy commonwealth of Christian, Muslim, and Jew. The Fāṭimids capitalized on this sorepoint, and, it must be remembered, their major claim to legitimacy in annexing Egypt was that they could safeguard it from the Christians and wage the Holy War (jihād) more effectively than the Ikhshīdids, on whom, along with the Hamdānids, this responsibility had fallen in consequence of the rapid withering of the ^CAbbāsīd caliphate.

Once the Fāṭimids had seized Egypt, however, they found themselves as dependent on their Christian and Jewish officials as were their predecessors. The first action against Christian and Jewish officials was taken near the end of the reign of al-^CAzīz. Later Al-Ḥākim issued a series of multifarious decrees aimed against the two tolerated minorities. Yahyā's statement that al-Ḥākim was forced to reinstate the Christian officials he had dismissed because there was no one to take their place indicates their importance in the administration of Egypt. Al-Ḥākim's ordinance directed against excessive display of wealth by Christians also shows that at least some Christians were doing very well in commercial and business endeavors in Egypt, well enough to incite the wrath of the Muslim community, which held that God's divine order should be reflected in some measure in this world.

The court doctors were almost all Christians, giving them a direct voice in the Caliph's ear. Among the

religious communities there was much jealousy and hatred, envy of the position of others and fear of such envy. It merely took some idealistic notions, placed in the young Caliph's mind, to stir up the cauldron of intercommunal feelings.

Antioch, when Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd arrived there in 405/1014-1015, had been under Byzantine rule for forty-five years since its reconquest in 969. In antiquity the city was one of the great metropolises of the eastern Mediterranean. During the period of Arab domination, Antioch lived in the shadow of its sister city, Aleppo, one hundred kilometres to the east, until the re-establishment of Byzantine rule gave it a new importance, both as a Byzantine forward bulwark and as a target for Muslim religious propaganda.

All contemporary accounts recognize Antioch as a great and prosperous city at this time. Ibn Hawqal wrote that a day would be necessary for a man on horseback to make the circuit of Antioch's wall. It was, according to him, the most pleasant city of Syria after Damascus, surrounded with estates, forests, and fields which freed it from any need of importations.³⁰

Ibn Butlān after his first visit to Antioch wrote to a friend in Baghdad:

The country between Aleppo and Antioch is without any ruins, fertile soil cultivated with wheat and barley under olive trees; its villages

follow each other in uninterrupted succession, its gardens are full of flowers and its water-courses stream freely.

Antioch is a large town, with a wall and an outwall. The wall has 360 towers on which the guard is mounted by turn by 4,000 watchmen who are sent from Constantinople, from the Imperial Court, to secure the safe guardianship of the town for a term of one year and who are relieved in the second year. The shape of the town is like a semicircle the diameter of which is leaning on a mountain. The wall rises with the mountain up to its summit and completes the circle. On the top of the mountain within the wall is a citadel which appears small on account of its distance from the town.³¹

The citadel (or cathedral?, bī^ca) of Qusyān (Cassian) was in the center of the town. It was one hundred paces in length and eighty in width. Halls around it accommodated the Byzantine functionaries and teachers of grammar and language, and on top of it was located a church (kanīsa). There was a hospital where the Patriarch, following the example of the Emperor at Constantinople, took the patients under his personal protection. Antioch also possessed baths which were reportedly unsurpassed in any other city of the age.³²

Antioch retained a Muslim population after it came under Byzantine sovereignty. During the revolt of Bardas Phocas (987-989) the Muslims as well as the Armenians in the city supported the rebel's brother Leo Phocas who at the end of the rebellion held out in a strategically-located tower on the mountain. Leo appealed to the Muslims of the city for yet more help, but the city population

instead suppressed the rebels. Apparently by 989 the Armenian migration into North Syria was already under way. There were also members of the Syrian Jacobite church in Antioch with their own patriarch.³³ Unfortunately, the source material on Antioch is so scanty that the city's civic history cannot be traced after the end of eastern Roman rule there in 637-638. Still Rozen's belief that Antioch during Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's lifetime was a half-Arab, half-Greek city is open to question.³⁴ Its population was probably highly heterogeneous, composed of Arab remnants from the days of Hamdānīd rule and enhanced by all the groups which the Byzantines called on to repopulate the land and to ensure its prosperity and loyalty. It is perhaps more judicious to say that Antioch was more Arab than Greek, and, although Syriac and Armenian could be heard, Arabic was the major spoken language. Upon this heterogeneous and heterodox population was imposed a layer of Greek-speaking bureaucrats and military officials. In Antioch a refugee such as Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd or an elder scholar such as Ibn Butlān could find safety and repose in an atmosphere that was both Arab and Christian. Doubtlessly this was the reason Ibn Butlān forsook Constantinople after only one year to come to Antioch.

Antioch was closely linked to Aleppo by commercial ties, and the Byzantine-Arab border was no hindrance to trade. When the Emperor Basil II ordered the cessation of

all trade and travel between his lands and those of Egypt and Syria in 1016, Ṣāliḥ b. Mirdās, the amir of the Kilāb tribe, which inhabited the amirate of Aleppo, successfully petitioned to have the prohibition raised from the area under his control.³⁵ This gives an indication of the significance of this trade. According to Ibn Buṭlān, Aleppo circa 1049 imported its entire fruit, vegetable, and wine supply from Byzantine territory.³⁶

Yahyā b. Sa^cīd lived in a time when unprecedentedly mild hostility made possible considerable contact and communication between Byzantium and the Arab lands. The Byzantine border running east of Antioch may have become a meaningless boundary for most purposes after the annual Muslim raids into Byzantine territory ceased about 967.

As the only Byzantine author of an extant Arabic chronicle, Yahyā b. Sa^cīd is a unique historical figure. His "Continuation" is the basic document on Byzantine-Arab interaction, 938-1034, to which other authors add only fragmentary information. He is also a source of rare information of a local east Anatolian and north Syrian nature and a wise commentator on the political and religious conflicts around the eastern Mediterranean. From the "Continuation" itself one could easily recognize that Yahyā b. Sa^cīd was Christian, but his Byzantine nationality would pass unnoticed if he, himself did not point it out. His personal style of chronography also appears to owe comparatively little to Byzantine historiography of the time.

He sticks dryly to the facts and enters rarely and reluctantly into the personalized and anecdotal explanations of events which are so common among contemporary Byzantine chroniclers. Naturally the modern commentator who would like to know more about the chronicler and his prejudices finds this a regrettable trait.

Our examination in the following chapters of Yahyā b. Sa^cīd's sources and discussion of some aspects of his historiographic method will attempt to peel away the veil of factuality which obscures this little-known figure and to illuminate the personality of the chronicler who has contributed so greatly to modern knowledge of the Byzantine-Arab relationship.

Footnotes

¹This characterization of these two traditions is that of C. H. Becker for the Tulunid period. C. H. Becker, Beiträge zur Geschichte Agyptens unterdem Islam. (Strassburg, 1902), I, 150-151.

²Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium (CSCO), ser. 3, vol. VII (Beirut, 1909), pt. 2, pp. 90-273. I. J. Krachkovskii and A. A. Vasiliev completed the first two-thirds of an edition using all the manuscripts but one (the Jerusalem ms.), Patrologia Orientalis (PO), XVIII, pp. 705-833, and XXIII, pp. 349-520. In citing this edition the first number given refers to the consecutive pagination of the edition of Yahyā; the second number refers to the page number of the separate volumes.

³V. R. Rozen, Imperator Vasilij Bulgarobojca, Izvlechenija iz Letopisi Jaxi Antiochiiskago, Zapiski Imperatorskoi Akademii Nauk, XLIV, Prilozhenie (St. Petersburg, 1883). In the 1972 Variorum (London) reprint M. Canard has written a short biographical sketch of Rozen, pp. i-v.

⁴The final excerpt Rozen gave was Yahyā's account of the Byzantine capture of Edessa in 1031. This was not available to Rozen in either of the manuscripts which Rozen had at his disposal but only contained in two other works. Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 387-388, #429.

⁵Yahyā, CSCO, 252-273.

⁶Yahyā, PO, 7-12/705-710.

⁷Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, chapter two of the introduction, 09-057, on Yahyā's biography. M. Canard summarizes Rozen's conclusions in the section Canard himself wrote in the second (French) edition of A. A. Vasiliev, Byzance et les Arabes, II, pt. 2, (Brussels, 1950), 80-91.

⁸Ibn Abī Usaybi^ca, Uyūn al-Anbā' fī Ṭabaqāt al-Atibbā' (Beirut, 1965), 545-546.

⁹Yahyā, PO, 311/519.

¹⁰Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 020, G. Assemani, Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementino-Vaticana (Rome, 1721), II, 393.

¹¹Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 017, 053.

¹²Actually John XVII was pope, June-December, 1003, and John XVIII, January, 1004-July, 1009. Either could have been the pope in question. V. Grumel, La Chronologie, (Paris, 1958), 432.

¹³Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz al-Hunafā bi Akhbār al-Fātimīyīn al-Khulafa', (Cairo, 1967, 1970), II, 70, states Abu Ya^Cqūb's death took place in Dhū al-Qa^Cda, 397/July 19-August 18, 1007.

¹⁴Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 025, 029-033; Yahyā, (CSCO), 219.

¹⁵Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 033.

¹⁶Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 48, 70, dates Abū Ya^Cqūb's service to al-Hākīm. Yahyā, PO, 272-273/481-482.

¹⁷Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 018; Assemani, Bibliotheca, II, 393.

¹⁸Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 054; Muhammad al-Hamawī, al-Ta'rīkh al-Mansūrī, ed. P. A. Giaznevich, (Moscow, 1963), 74a (p. 155).

¹⁹C. Cahen (ed.), "La Chronique Abrégée d'al-Azīmī," Journal Asiatique, 230 (1938), 357.

²⁰Yahyā, (CSCO), 271; M. Canard, "Les sources Arabes de l'histoire Byzantine aux confins de Xe et XIe siècles," Revue des Études Byzantines, 19 (1961), 302.

²¹Yahyā, (CSCO), 216-217.

²²Ibn Abī Usaybi^Ca, Uyūn al-Anbā', 323, 545.

²³Assemani, Bibliotheca, II, 393.

²⁴Ibn Abī Usaybi^Ca, Uyun al-Anba', 323; "Ibn Butlān," EI², III, ; J. Schacht and M. Meyerhof, The Medico-Philosophical Controversy between Ibn Butlan of of Baghdad and Ibn Ridwan of Cairo, Bulletin of the Egyptian University Faculty of the Arts, 13 (1937), 65.

²⁵Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 021.

²⁶Yahyā, (CSCO), 218, 219.

²⁷Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 020-038, 052-053, for Rozen's investigation of Yahyā's medical background.

²⁸G. Graf, Geschichte der Christlichen Arabischen Literatur, II (Studi i Testi, 173), 51, relying on Paul Sbath, Fihris, supplement volume, #2527-2529, (Cairo, 1940).

²⁹Yahyā, PO, 277/485.

³⁰Ibn Hawqal, Kitāb Sūrāt al-Ard, ed. J. H. Kramers, Leiden, 1939), I, 179.

³¹Ibn al-Qiftī, Ta'riḫ al-Hukumā', ed. J. Lippert, (Leipzig, 1902), 296; Schacht and Meyerhof, Medico-Philosophical Controversy, 55-56.

³²Ibn al-Qiftī, Ta'riḫ al-Hukumā' 296-296; Schacht and Meyerhof, Medico-Philosophical Controversy, 54-56; Yāqūt al-Hamawī, Mu^Cjam al-Bulḍān, ed. F. Wüstenfeld, Jaqut's Geographisches Wörterbuch (Leipzig, 1866-1870), I, 382-383.

³³Yahyā, PO, 219/427.

³⁴Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 081.

³⁵Yahyā, CSCO, 214.

³⁶Ibn al-Qiftī, Ta'rikh al-Hukumā', 296; Schacht and Meyerhof, Medico-Philosophical Controversy, 54.

PART I: SOURCES

CHAPTER 2

THĀBIT b. SINĀN AND THE ANONYMOUS IRAQI CHRONICLE; IBN ZULĀQ

In considering the achievement of a chronicler the first question which demands an answer is that of his sources. One can begin evaluating the acumen of the chronicler himself by the quality of the sources he has used. In this respect Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd presents a particularly difficult problem. Yahyā intentionally left his sources anonymous, and his compact technique of combining information from them has further obscured the question of their identification. This is in contrast to the tradition of Muslim Arabic historiography which placed high value on citing reputable authorities for one's information. On the subject of sources Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd says only:

I composed this book for him who commissioned me with its composition, and, after that, histories that I had not read at the time I began its composition came into my hands, and I altered it completely, and recast its order, and recomposed it. Then again, after having changed my residence to Antioch in the year 405 of the Hijra, I examined it a second time. Other histories came into my possession, and I augmented and added to what I extracted from it, and I changed some of it.¹

The investigation of Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's sources which follows substantiates his claim to have drawn the material for his chronicle from numerous sources. It identifies for the first time four Arabic authors whose works Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd had at his disposal in writing his "Continuation"--Thābit b. Sinān, Ibn Zūlāq, ^CAlī b. Muḥammad al-Shimshāṭī, and al-Musabbihī--and points out the existence of an important but anonymous fifth source. Thābit b. Sinān, Ibn Zūlāq, and al-Musabbihī were among the most famous historical writers in Arabic of the tenth and eleventh centuries.

The supporting evidence for these conclusions is presented in Chapters 2 and 3. The order in which the sources are dealt with is primarily chronological and only secondarily geographical. Chapter 2 treats Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's two Iraqi sources: Thābit b. Sinān and an anonymous chronicle. The question of his relation to each of them is best discussed in the context of his relation to the other. Also in the second chapter Ibn Zūlāq, one of Yahyā's sources for Egyptian affairs in the first part of his "Continuation," is discussed. Chapter 3 will treat a North Syrian-Mesopotamian, al-Shimshāṭī, and an Egyptian, al-Mushabbihī, both of whom were important authorities for events around the end of the tenth century.

There has been no study on Yahyā's Arabic sources to date, but Marius Canard has considered the problem in several places.² His conclusions--that Yahyā drew on

Thābit b. Sinān, Miskawayh, and possibly Hilāl al-Ṣābī-- were highly tentative. On very fragmentary evidence V. R. Rozen proposed Miskawayh as a source.³ Previously, only one of Yahyā's Arabic sources has been conclusively identified: the hagiography of Christopher, the martyred patriarch of Antioch (d. 967), by Ibrāhīm b. Yūhannā. The relationship of Yahyā and the Vita Christophori will be discussed in Chapter 4.

Thanks to the existence of a considerable number of medieval Arabic chronicles which have remained extant, it is possible to attempt to identify Yahyā b. Sa^cīd's Arabic sources. For what they tell of the tenth and eleventh centuries some of these chronicles are based on first-rate contemporary sources. The majority of them were written one or two centuries at least after Yahyā b. Sa^cīd lived. However, thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth century chroniclers, such as ^cAlī b. Zāfir al-^cAzdī (d. 1226), Abū Bakr b. al-Dawādārī (d. 1348), al-Maqrīzī (d. 1442), and Abū al-Mahāsin b. Taghrībirdī (d. 1469), preserve long passages from earlier chronicles intact and even cite the original authors. Through careful comparisons of many texts, it is possible to name some of the Arabic authors on whom Yahyā b. Sa^cīd drew.

Yahyā also used non-Arabic sources, which were probably among those which he came upon for the first time in Antioch. They were written in Greek and possibly also in Syriac. Unfortunately, the extant Greek chronicles

for the history of the period Yahyā writes on are few in number and are closely related to one general chronicle tradition. V. R. Rozen is the only scholar to have studied Yahyā's Greek sources.⁵ Chapter 4 will also include a review of Rozen's conclusions, which it has only been possible to update here as no major new evidence has come to light concerning the non-Arabic sources of Yahyā's "Continuation."

Thābit b. Sinān and the Anonymous
Iraqi Chronicle

A comparison of Yahyā's chronicle with Abū ʿAlī Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Miskawayh's Kitāb Tajārib al-Umam (Book of the Experiences of the Nations)⁶ clearly reveals that for his knowledge of Baghdad and Iraqi affairs even up to as late a date as 360/970, Yahyā drew on Thābit b. Sinān (d. 365/976), either directly or indirectly. If, as Rozen and Canard both believed, Yahyā b. Saʿīd had direct access to the Tajārib al-Umam, it would be highly possible that he took his information not from Thābit b. Sinān himself but from Miskawayh, who is known to have used Thābit as a source. At issue then is whether Yahyā b. Saʿīd received his information directly from Thābit b. Sinān or indirectly through Miskawayh. Elucidation of the relationship between Yahyā b. Saʿīd and Miskawayh is of primary importance for determining the relationship of the former to Thābit b. Sinān.

Thābit b. Sinān was a member of the Sabian sect which flourished at Harrān and from which came during the ninth and tenth centuries some of the most distinguished intellectuals of the Arab-Islamic world. He was a professional physician who served the caliphs al-Muqtadir (d. 320/932), al-Rādī (d. 329/940), al-Muttaqī (deposed 333/944), al-Mustakfī (deposed 334/946), and al-Mutī^c (deposed 363/974).⁷ Prominently placed to observe events from the apex of power, Thābit was one of the original proponents in the Islamic intellectual tradition of writing history, focused on contemporary events, in a secular style.⁸

M. S. Khan in a recent study⁹ attributed three historical works to Thābit b. Sinān: a lost history of Syria and Egypt, a history of the Qarmatian sect, the Akhbār al-Qarāmīṭa,¹⁰ and a lost history of his own times, which recounted the history of Baghdad, Iraq, and occasionally a western Iran and Syria during the period 293-363/908-974. There is some evidence that this "Contemporary history" may have continued through 365/976. It is this last work which concerns us here.

Thābit's "Contemporary history," which he called simply ta'riḫ (history), was well-known to later historians who made great use of it. Among this number were Miskawayh (d. 1030), Ibn al-Athīr (d. 1234),¹¹ al-Hamadhānī (d. 1127),¹² Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 1200),¹³ Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī (d. 1234),¹⁴ and al-Dhahabī (d. 1348).¹⁵

Thābit's "Contemporary history" was a continuation of the famous history of al-Tabarī (d. 923), which ended in 302/915. In turn, Hilāl al-Ṣābī (d. 1056) and his son Ghars al-Ni^cma (d. 480/1087-1088) continued Thābit b. Sinān, and then Ibn al-Jawzī and his grandson Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī carried the tradition on farther. Judging from the extant works of the last two authors, each of these writers retained in abridged form the addition made by his predecessor to the historical tradition. C. H. Becker gave the name Reichschronographie to the tradition which these successive works formed because it was centered on Baghdad, the ^cAbbāsīd capital.¹⁶ Although Thābit b. Sinān was not the only tenth century continuator of al-Tabarī, his "Contemporary history" became the best known and preserved history of the immediately post-Tabarī era through the tradition of the Reichschronographie.

Within the portion of the Tajārib al-Umam covering the years 301-334/914-946 Miskawayh mentioned fifteen times that his authority was Thābit b. Sinān. In fact, Thābit was Miskawayh's chief source from the beginning of al-Muqtadir's reign (295/908) until 340/952.¹⁷ Miskawayh continued to rely on Thābit after 340 but to a lesser extent although Miskawayh himself states that for what comes after 340 he depended on eyewitnesses and other presumably oral sources. This, however, does not mean that he used no written sources, but simply that he reduced

his reliance upon them.¹⁸ We shall see below that he made use of at least one other written source.

On the basis of a careful comparison between the texts of Yahyā b. Sa^cīd, Miskawayh, and the other authors utilizing Thābit b. Sinān--mainly al-Hamadhānī, Ibn al-Jawzī, Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī, Ibn al-Athīr, and Elias of Nišībīn--Yahyā's direct acquaintance with the actual chronicle of Thābit b. Sinān can be demonstrated.

Elias of Nišībīn's Chronography¹⁹ is particularly helpful in this demonstration. Although Elias abbreviated his summaries of events in each year to only a few terse sentences, he cited Thābit by name for each year that he drew on his "Contemporary history." Thus, where there is broad agreement in content among the chroniclers known to have had Thābit as a source, Elias verifies that Thābit actually did describe the events in question. He wrote his chronicle in 1019.

The appendix to this chapter lists thirty-six instances where Yahyā drew on Thābit b. Sinān.²⁰ Examples eight, seventeen, twenty-two, twenty-four, twenty-seven, and thirty-four are evidence that Yahyā drew his information directly from Thābit b. Sinān and not via Miskawayh. The last two examples--Sayf al-Dawla's campaign of 342/953-954 and Nicephoros Phocas' campaign of 355/965-966--are not even mentioned by Miskawayh.

Another event which Miskawayh completely omitted was the surrender of the Holy Mandilion to the Byzantines in 331/944.²¹ The Holy Mandilion was a towel on which Jesus Christ had once wiped his face, leaving an image of his visage preserved on the towel when it dried. Subsequently, the Mandilion, having become a treasured icon,²² was kept in the cathedral church of Edessa, where it remained until the Byzantines besieged the city in 944. The Byzantines offered, either on their own or in response to the request of the people of Edessa, to release a certain number of Muslim prisoners of war, in addition to raising the siege, if the Mandilion were surrendered to them. The question was referred to Baghdad. The caliph al-Muttaqī asked his vizir Ibn Muqla to summon the leading qādīs and jurists to consider the issue. When they had assembled, there took place a long discussion, in which it was angrily recalled that the Mandilion had hung in the cathedral at Edessa for a great period of time and never before had a Byzantine emperor requested its surrender. Then the venerable ^CAlī b. ^CIsā, twice vizir and frequently shadow director of the Baghdad administration, spoke eloquently in favor of the opposite viewpoint. The release of the prisoners and their delivery from the Abode of Unbelief (Dār al-Kufr) deserved the highest priority, he argued. Accepting ^CAlī b. ^CIsā's advice, the assembled jurists successfully pressed it upon the caliph al-Muttaqī.

The Edessans surrendered the Mandilion which was taken to Constantinople where the population gave it a triumphal welcome, and the Byzantines released the Muslim prisoners.

Besides Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd, Ibn al-Athīr, al-Hamadhānī, Ibn al-Jawzī, and Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī all give some version of this story, and Elias of Nišībīn cites Thābit b. Sinān in his notice of these negotiations. The affair is conspicuously missing from the Tajārib al-Umam of Miskawayh. Yahyā added some details not found in the standard Baghdad account. For instance, only he told the number of Muslim prisoners released, two hundred, or mentioned that the Byzantines agreed to a nonaggression treaty in regard to the territory of Edessa which stood until Sayf al-Dawla violated it seven years later.²³

Two factors hindered the realization until now that Thābit b. Sinān's lost "Contemporary history" was Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's actual source: On the one hand, Yahyā severely abridged the material he drew from a source and frequently combined the excerpt with information taken from other sources. On the other hand, other chroniclers, like Yahyā, were usually concise in repeating what they took from Thābit b. Sinān's writings. Fortunately, the other chroniclers, besides Yahyā, who relied on Thābit b. Sinān's history, used it as their only source for Iraqi and west Iranian events. Thus, comparison of all the texts--only Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī's Mir'āt al-Zamān is not available in a published edition--along with consultation

of Elias of Niṣībīn's Chronography²⁴ leads to the incapable conclusion that Yahyā always drew directly on Thābit b. Sinān. There is then no evidence to support the proposition that the information Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd received from Thābit b. Sinān was transmitted via Miskawayh's Tajārib al-Umam.

The principal reason for considering Miskawayh as the link between Thābit b. Sinān and Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd for earlier events described in the Tajārib al-Umam is that there are numerous striking textual congruencies between what Miskawayh wrote in the later portions of his history and the corresponding passages in Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's "Continuation."

Canard, who is intimately acquainted with the texts of both authors, has generally maintained that a direct relationship existed between Miskawayh and Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd. However, he has expressed different opinions in different places, from which it appears that he recognized the difficulties in crediting Yahyā with direct access to the Tajārib al-Umam.²⁵

Rozen, who had at his disposal only a few pages of Miskawayh, which he had copied from a manuscript during a brief visit in Oxford, was much less cautious. He believed that "For the history of the Būyids and Ḥamdānids, the composition of Ibn Miskawayh, ending with ^CAdud al-Dawla, must be recognized as the genuine integer fons

since Yahyā was not able to find a better source or one closer to the events recounted. It is not possible, therefore, to speak about whether Ibn Miskawayh and Yahyā both made use of one common source unknown to us."²⁶

Rozen's remarks referred to a series of parallel passages describing the defeat of the Būyid ruler of Iraq ʿIzz al-Dawla Bakhtiyār (356-367/967-978) and his Ḥamdānid ally Abū Taghlib b. Nāṣir al-Dawla, the amir of Mosul (358-369/969-979) by Bakhtiyār's cousin ʿAdud al-Dawla Fanākhusrāw at Qaṣr al-Jāss, 17 Shawwāl, 367/ May 28, 978 and the flight of Abū Taghlib to Byzantine and subsequently to Fāṭimid territory, where he died in battle, 1 Ṣafar, 369/ August 28, 979.²⁷ This account, which is related in broken sequence by both Yahyā b. Saʿīd and Miskawayh, is the most extended and remarkable instance of parallel texts to be found in the two chronicles. At the same time, versions of the same story also appear in a number of other later chronicles, almost none of which had any known connection with Miskawayh's.²⁸

Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Miskawayh was Persian in nationality and a physician by profession. During the period which concerns us here, Miskawayh served successively under Abū al-Faḍl b. al-ʿAmīd, 353-360/964-970, Abū al-Faḍl's son Abū al-Faṭḥ b. al-ʿAmīd, 360-366/970-976, and the supreme amir ʿAdud al-Dawla, 366-372/976-983. Although not much can be said with certainty about

Miskawayh's life from after the death of ʿAdud al-Dawla in 372/983 until his own death in 421/1030, it appears that during at least part of this time he moved in the highest circles of Būyid society in Iraq, including that of the amirs Ṣamsām al-Dawla (372-376/983-987) and Bahā' al-Dawla (379-403/989-1012).²⁹ Miskawayh was a highly educated individual who was active in philosophy as well as in historiography. In his Experiences of the Nations (Tajārīb al-Umam) he undertook to provide historical lessons from the examples of past nations, including early Islamic history. Thus, his history has an avowedly didactic purpose. It covers all of Islamic history up to 369/979 but concentrates especially on the final two decades of that period. As an example of Muslim historical writing the Tajārīb al-Umam is extraordinary. In the opinion of a leading authority, F. Rosenthal, "[Miskawayh's] narrative of the first seventy years of the fourth century of the hijrah, due to his own merit or the sources he used, represents the highwater mark for historical writing in annalistic form."³⁰ Miskawayh relates events in a cause and effect sequence and provides a rich background of financial and administrative detail. This contrasts starkly with the normally straightforward narration of events employed by most Arabic annalists. In essence, Miskawayh tried to make sense out of the time in which he lived. It is this departure which gives his history its great distinction.

In flavor the Tajārib al-Umam reflects the interests of a bureaucrat. Miskawayh explains the governmental ability or inability of the most important figures of the Būyid state by their respective strength or defects of character. However, Miskawayh reserves his most favorable judgements for those under whom he personally served. Thus, while he had definite criteria for judging the performance of an important individual in government, the extent of objectivity he actually achieved is open to question.³¹

In advancing a direct source relationship between the Tajārib al-Umam and the "Continuation" of Yahyā b. Saʿīd, Rozen made two assumptions: first, that no source superior to the Tajārib al-Umam could have been available to Yahyā and, second, that no other writer could have been more prominently placed than Miskawayh to observe Iraqi events as they unfolded during the 970's.

Rozen was certainly correct in assuming that no other contemporary chronicle could have covered the same years as did Miskawayh in a more interesting or informative manner. However, it should be remembered that the same qualities which make the Tajārib al-Umam so attractive to the modern reader may in the tenth century have diminished its popularity--and hence its circulation--outside of Būyid court circles.

Miskawayh's statement that he used no written source after 340/952³² appears to verify the second of Rozen's assumptions--that no other observer could possibly have stood in closer proximity to the events described by Miskawayh--and therefore no question of Yahyā and Miskawayh having used a common source is involved. However, Miskawayh's continued reliance on Thābit b. Sinān after 340/952 belies his own statement.

In fact, there is substantial reason to think that a mutual source may have united the accounts of Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd and Miskawayh. First of all, it can be demonstrated that Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd had at least one other--unfortunately, anonymous--source besides Miskawayh at his disposal for the decade of the 970's if, indeed, he relied on the Tajārib al-Umam at all.

A glance at events during 362/972-973, as recorded by Miskawayh and Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd provides sufficient example. On 1 Muharram, 362/ October 12, 972, Byzantine troops under the command of the Byzantine emperor John Tzimiskēs sacked and burned Nišībīn. Coming after the Byzantine conquest of Aleppo in 962 and the Byzantine victories and conquests that followed during the rest of the 960's, a great wave of fear and agitation for protection struck the Syro-Mesopotamian border regions of the Dār al-Islām and even Baghdad itself. Mobs carrying open Qur'āns approached the palace of the Caliph (the

Sultān's palace, according to Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd) and violently demanded protection from the Rūm.³³ As for the Būyid amir of Iraq, Miskawayh wrote that "Bakhtiyār was at the time in Kūfah, ostensibly visiting the martyrrium but really on a hunting expedition."³⁴

Bakhtiyār tried to employ Abū Taghlib, the amir of Mosul, and Sebuktekīn, the Turkish chamberlain whom Bakhtiyār had left in Baghdad, to throw back the Byzantines. He directed his vizir Ibn Baqiyya to tell Sebuktekīn to issue the call for a levée en masse. This action reflected adversely on Bakhtiyār's government since it was an open proclamation that the regime itself could not protect the Muslim population with the military forces at its disposal.

When Sebuktekīn called on the population of Baghdad to prepare for the Holy War, an amazing quantity and variety of arms was produced, but any hope which rose from this show of strength soon evaporated, as the population split into Shī^Ca and Sunnī elements, which began battling each other. A great deal of damage was done in the ensuing rioting.³⁵

Miskawayh's account of these events up to this point agrees in general with that of Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd as well as with that given by Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī; there are also verbal similarities which might give the impression that Miskawayh is the original source. Miskawayh, however,

relates all these events with those of A.H. 361 while Yahyā b. Sa^cīd and Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī clearly state that they took place after 1 Muharram, 362, the date of the sack of Niṣībīn which set off the series of disorders.

Miskawayh also fails to mention that when Bakhtiyār finally reached Baghdad, he was unable to restore order until after he ordered the burning of the Shī^cite quarter of al-Karkh. The following passages from Yahyā b. Sa^cīd and Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī demonstrate that they relied on the same source for their account of the fire.

Yahyā, 149/357:

دعت الضرورة الى ان طرَح السلطان
النار في الجانب الغربي من البلد يوم السبت
لليلتين بقيتا من شهر رمضان سنة اثنين
وستين وثلاثمائة واحرق باب البصرة
وما يليه من حد بركة زلزل التي
السماكين ومنع الناس من اطفائها
واخذت يمينا وشمالا واحترق عالم من
الرجال والنساء والصبيان والبهائم
وكان امرا فظيما ولم ير مثله ولا سمع به ...
ثم اخذ السلطان ثمانية عشر رجلا من
العيارين واهل الفتنة وقتل اربعة
نفر منهم واعطى من بقى منهم الامان
ووعدهم بالرزق وكف البلاء قليلا
وسكنت الفتنة .

Necessity demanded that the
Sultān set the west side of
the city on fire, Saturday,
28 Ramadān, 362. [The

Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī, Mir'āt
al-Zamān, B. M. Or. 4619,
169v:

فألجست الضرورة الى ان رمى السلطان
النار في الجانب الغربي من بغداد لان
الفتنة كانت فيه فرمى النار من حد
بركة زلزل الى عند السماكين واحرق
الكرخ كله ومنع الناس من اطفائها
فاخذت يمينا وشمالا فاحترق الوفا من
الناس والبهائم وكان يوما عظيما لم يجرى
في الاسلام مثله واعطى السلطان
العيارين الامان فسكنت الفتنة .

Necessity persisted until
the Sultān set the west
side of Baghdad on fire be-
cause of the civil strife

quarter of] Bāb al-Basra and what adjoined it from the edge of Birkat Zalzal to [al-Sammākīn] were burned, and the people were forbidden to extinguish it. It reached in all directions, and many men, women, children, and animals were burned. It was an odious affair. Its like was never seen nor heard of...Then the Sultān took eighteen men from among the vagabonds and rioters. He killed four of them and gave the rest amān and promised them sustenance. The distress receded a little, and the civil strife subsided.

in it, and he set on fire [everything] from the edge of Birkat Zalzal to al-Sammākīn, and all Karkh was burned. The people were forbidden to extinguish it. It reached in all directions, and thousands of people and animals were burned. It was a distressing day, the like of which has never been seen in Islām. The Sultān gave the vagabonds amān, and the civil strife subsided.

As no passage in the Tajārib al-Umam corresponds to the above passages, Miskawayh could not be the potential source of this account. It is also not possible that the common source in question here was the chronicle of Thābit b. Sinān, which Yahyā, Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī, and Miskawayh all used elsewhere, as we have seen, since Sibṭ states under A.H. 360 that the manuscript of Thābit b. Sinān available to him ended in that year.³⁶

In addition to the account of the riots in Baghdad, Yahyā b. Sa^cīd mentions several other facts concerning events in the period 362-369/972-979, which could not possibly have been taken from Miskawayh. For instance, he asserted that ^cAdud al-Dawla assumed the titles Shāhānshāh and Tāj al-Milla (Crown of the Faith) whereas Miskawayh

throughout the Tajārib al-Umam suppressed mention of these titles.³⁷

Yahyā also says that in 364/974-975 the troops of Alptekīn, Sebuktekīn's successor at the head of the rebellious Turkish contingent in Bakhtiyār's army, stood off Bakhtiyār near Wāsīt for forty-eight days while Miskawayh speaks only of "about fifty days" (nahw khamsīn yawman). Yet a glance at the passages themselves indicates that both Yahyā and Miskawayh must have used the same source.

Yahyā, 155/363:

ونزل (الفتكين) على دون الفرسخ
من واسط والتقىوا واثقل
العسكرين واقام الحرب بينهم في
الجانبا الغربي من واسط ثمانية
واربعين يوما .

[Alptekīn] camped at a distance of less than one parasang from Wāsīt. The vanguard met and the fight between them on the bank west of Wāsīt lasted forty-eight days.

Miskawayh, Tajārib al-Umam, II, 335-336:

ونزلوا (الاتراك) على دون الفرسخ
من واسط وعبروا على جسرهم وتقدموا
الى مصاف بختيار فكانوا يواقعونه
بنواب واثقل ذلك نحو خمسين يوما .

[The Turks] camped at a distance of less than one parasang from Wāsīt. They crossed on their bridge and advanced to Bakhtiyār's positions and continued to attack him in fits and spurts. This lasted for about fifty days.

The occurrence of the rather unusual phrase "[So-and-so] camped at a distance of less than one parasang from Wāsīt" in both chronicles must signify the same source, but Yahyā

could not have taken the number forty-eight from Miskawayh. His statement that the fighting lasted about fifty days is an attempt to round off the original figure, as given by Yahyā's source, or, perhaps, to reconcile it with a figure given by a second source.

Similarly, Miskawayh does not state the date of ʿAdud al-Dawla's victorious entry into Baghdad, 18 Jumādā I, 364/ February 3, 976, nor the date of Rukn al-Dawla's death at the beginning of A.H. 366 (=on or after August 30, 976). Yahyā b. Saʿīd gives the dates for both these events.³⁸

Therefore, it is undeniable that Yahyā b. Saʿīd used at least one other source in addition to the Tajārib al-Umam in recording the political history of Iraq after the point where the ta'rīkh of Thābit b. Sinān ended.

Moreover, close examination of the texts of Yahyā b. Saʿīd's "Continuation" and the Tajārib al-Umam yields no specific evidence to support the proposition that Yahyā had Miskawayh at his disposal at all.

As has been stated already, Miskawayh in the Tajārib al-Umam described the unfolding of events in conformity with a well-developed concept of history and his own strong ideas on the personal qualities of the leading figures in Būyid and Iraqi politics of the decade. Furthermore, Miskawayh wrote as a bureaucrat who was well aware of how variation in political leadership affected the performance of the administrative apparatus.

These pervasive traits in the Tajārib al-Umam are completely absent in Yahyā b. Saʿīd's "Continuation."

For instance, Yahyā does not show any of the extreme prejudice against either Bakhtiyār or his vizir Ibn Baqiyya which Miskawayh exhibits blatantly. In characterizing Ibn Baqiyya Miskawayh says that he had previously held the post of steward at Bakhtiyār's table. Miskawayh continues:

When [Ibn Baqiyya] became vizir he wished to continue to perform these services, only Bakhtiyār would not allow it. People marvelled at his being appointed vizir, as he was a common man, whose eye never fell on any but his superiors, and who regarded himself as everyone's inferior. The appointment added to the instability and decay of Bakhtiyār's power, and was the joke of the lower classes both near and far.³⁹

Elsewhere Miskawayh refers to Ibn Baqiyya as a man "far from every virtue."⁴⁰

The chaos that allegedly prevailed during Bakhtiyār's reign was, according to Miskawayh:

All due to the improvidence of Bakhtiyār, his neglect of affairs, his devotion to pleasure, and his repugnance to taking any hand in the administration, in consequence whereof respect for authority was lost, the people broke restraint and raided each other, opposing caprices and mutually hostile designs were openly proclaimed, murder became so common that not a day passed without a number of victims, whose murderers were unknown, and if they were known could not be caught, financial supplies were cut off, and the distant provinces reduced to ruin by the ruin of the capital.⁴¹

Both Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd and Miskawayh state that Bakhtiyār's extreme financial difficulties led him into fomenting hostilities against his own chamberlain Sebuktekīn in order to recover the iqṭā^Cs which he controlled. Yahyā, however, says nothing about the ensuing civil strife in Ahwāz between the Dailamite and Turkish factions of Bakhtiyār's army, which Miskawayh records. This eventually led to civil war in Iraq between Bakhtiyār, who had the support of the Dailamites, and the Turks in his army who were led at first by Sebuktekīn and later by Alptekīn. The Turkish threat to Bakhtiyār set the stage for the intervention of his cousin ^CAdud al-Dawla during 364/974-975 in Iraq.⁴²

Miskawayh's account of the history of Iraq, 364-366/974-977, is especially valuable because of his presence in the retinue of Abū al-Fath b. al-^CAmīd, who was sent from Rayy to accompany ^CAdud al-Dawla by his master the supreme amir Rukn al-Dawla (338-366/949-977). Although ^CAdud al-Dawla's intervention in Iraq was made in favor of his cousin, he ended up trying to steal away Bakhtiyār's realm. After the failure of ^CAdud al-Dawla's first attempt at usurpation and his evacuation of Iraq, Ibn al-^CAmīd remained in Baghdad as the representative of Rukn al-Dawla. Then the latter died in early 366 (=on or after August 30, 977), ^CAdud al-Dawla tried a second time--in this case, successfully--to seize his

cousin's dominions. Thus, Miskawayh was an eyewitness of some central events during three crucial years in ^CAdud al-Dawla's career. To create the laudatory picture of his character and accomplishments, which ^CAdud al-Dawla obviously coveted, it was necessary that the usurpation of his cousin Bakhtiyār's kingdom be shown in a favorable light. It was incumbent upon Miskawayh, who was partial to ^CAdud al-Dawla and whose service he entered in 366/972, to offer an apologia for his hostile actions against his cousin. Miskawayh had the advantage of being able to base his interpretation of events on information obtained at firsthand.

It will be profitable to examine the accounts which Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd and Miskawayh give of the history of these three controversial years. The two writers treat ^CAdud al-Dawla's decision to seize control of Iraq from Bakhtiyār in what are, it appears, significantly different ways. Yahyā says that "When the victory in favor of Fanākhusrāw was completed, his appetite extended to seizing the kingdom of Iraq." Miskawayh, however, suggests a more deterministic explanation of ^CAdud al-Dawla's decision: "When ^CAdud al-Daulah had won this victory, no one, near or far, had any doubt that he would assume possession of this realm and incorporate it with his own, owing to Bakhtiyār's inability to govern it, his devotion to all sorts of amusements and frivolities, and the liberties taken with him by the Dailamites and Turks."⁴³

The tone of Miskawayh's words seems intended to relieve ʿAdud al-Dawla of the onus of actually having decided to steal Iraq away from Bakhtiyār. Rather he dutifully accepted the role thrust upon him as a consequence of Bakhtiyār's misrule. Indeed, Miskawayh represents Bakhtiyār as innately incompetent to rule. This became a major theme in Miskawayh's rationalization of ʿAdud al-Dawla's usurpation and, perhaps, also in ʿAdud al-Dawla's own propaganda. Yahyā b. Saʿīd, in contrast, sees ʿAdud al-Dawla's decision as a manifestation of his own will.

One of the most valuable insights that Miskawayh gives into Būyid politics of this period is his description of ʿAdud al-Dawla's attempt in 364/974-975 to gain the consent of the supreme amir Rukn al-Dawla to the annexation of Iraq to his own kingdom in Fārs. ʿAdud al-Dawla decided to send Abū al-Fath b. al-ʿAmīd, Rukn al-Dawla's representative in Iraq, as an intermediary to Rayy to argue his case before Rukn al-Dawla. Miskawayh, whose patron at this time was Abū al-Fath, is presumably a firsthand source for the arguments which ʿAdud al-Dawla wished to make in his own behalf. These ranged from the specific to the general: Bakhtiyār could not manage an army. He was perpetually short of funds. In a word, he was unsuited as a consequence of his own personal incompetence to rule any state. Recognizing this, Bakhtiyār chose to abdicate, ʿAdud al-Dawla claimed.⁴⁴

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd also, although much more briefly, enumerates the contents of the letter which Ibn al-^CAmīd carried to Rukn al-Dawla. According to Yahyā, ^CAdud al-Dawla asserted in his letter that the army and the clients loathed Bakhtiyār; that they sought their pay from him and that he was unable to give it to them (thereby, further alienating them); that ^CAdud al-Dawla feared that the troops would imprison Bakhtiyār in his own palace; and that Bakhtiyār had asked to retire from public affairs and requested that his resignation be accepted.⁴⁵

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's summary of the contents of the letter is not greatly different from Miskawayh's more detailed description. Nevertheless, there are no textual similarities to indicate that Yahyā was acquainted with Miskawayh's inside account, which includes the story of how ^CAdud al-Dawla deviously compelled Bakhtiyār's abdication. Yahyā says simply that ^CAdud al-Dawla tricked Bakhtiyār into coming to his palace and then arrested him.⁴⁶

On the one hand, Yahyā does not personally confirm ^CAdud al-Dawla's accusation that the army hated Bakhtiyār, but, on the other hand, he does substantiate that his financial difficulties were the original stimulus for Bakhtiyār's decision to move against Sebuktekīn and the Turks.⁴⁷ Thus, Bakhtiyār's insolvency can be considered an indisputable fact. We shall see, however,

that the idea that the Būyid army in Iraq--the Dailamites--hated Bakhtiyār was actually a facet of ʿAdud al-Dawla's propoganda. Also, Yahyā makes absolutely no mention of Bakhtiyār's supposed incompetence. This contention reflects Miskawayh's own convictions, and, perhaps, in this case, he is putting words in ʿAdud al-Dawla's mouth.

According to Miskawayh, Rukn al-Dawla would not receive Ibn al-ʿAmīd when he arrived in Rayy and refused even to listen to ʿAdud al-Dawla's rationalizations of his own actions.⁴⁸ Yahyā, however, ignores Ibn al-ʿAmīd's cold reception in Rayy.

The attitude of the supreme amir would have been inconsequential to ʿAdud al-Dawla, however, if the political and military situation in which he found himself in Iraq had not been bordering on the desperate.

Both Yahyā b. Saʿīd and Miskawayh give some facts of the settlement ʿAdud al-Dawla finally negotiated with Bakhtiyār once he was convinced that Rukn al-Dawla's hostility could not be pacified.

Miskawayh says merely that Bakhtiyār agreed to be ʿAdud al-Dawla's deputy in these provinces and that the khutba thereafter would be given in the name of ʿAdud al-Dawla. Strangely, Yahyā b. Saʿīd describes the conditions of the settlement more explicitly than does the eyewitness Miskawayh. He says that the agreement called for Bakhtiyār to resume governing all the villages and

towns which he had formerly governed and that ʿAdud al-Dawla would withdraw from them; ʿAdud al-Dawla's name was to be invoked in the khutba after Rukn al-Dawla's but before Bakhtiyār's; Bakhtiyār and his brother and deputy Ibrāhīm b. Muʿizz al-Dawla would listen to and heed ʿAdud al-Dawla; they would neither abrogate nor conclude any agreement without consulting ʿAdud al-Dawla and securing his permission. This agreement was written out in several copies, 28 Ramaḍān, 364/ June 11, 975.⁴⁹

Thus, according to Yahyā b. Saʿīd, ʿAdud al-Dawla was the beneficiary of a firm agreement which recognized his sovereignty over Iraq but not his right to directly rule it. Included in this agreement was a clause which, by prohibiting Bakhtiyār from concluding other alliances, rendered him permanently vulnerable to ʿAdud al-Dawla. Later, the thesis was to become central to ʿAdud al-Dawla's defense of his second intervention in Iraq that Bakhtiyār had failed to abide by the conditions agreed upon.

Yahyā b. Saʿīd's narrative for the following two years presents a sharp contrast to Miskawayh's. For example, Yahyā passes over A.H. 365/976-977 without a word although Miskawayh describes the important meeting in that year at Isfahan between Rukn al-Dawla and ʿAdud al-Dawla. Rukn al-Dawla recognized ʿAdud al-Dawla as the rightful successor to his position as supreme amir.

The most significant consequence of this meeting was to impress upon Bakhtiyār that only time stood between him and the full brunt of ʿAdud al-Dawla's wrath. According to Miskawayh, Bakhtiyār was immediately aware that he was being sacrificed and appealed to Rukn al-Dawla for help, but the only comfort he received were vague promises from ʿAdud al-Dawla that his cousin would be secure if his conduct were not displeasing. Bakhtiyār was not reassured. Miskawayh says that he set about arranging alliances with other minor powers, including the Ḥamdānid Abū Taghlib and ʿImrān b. Shahīn, the ruler of the Marshes, in preparation for the day when ʿAdud al-Dawla succeeded to the supreme amirate.

Miskawayh claims that in 365/975-976 Bakhtiyār also dropped ʿAdud al-Dawla's name from the khutba in Baghdad and induced the caliph al-Ta'ī^c to proclaim him as the first member of the Būyid family, thus exalting Bakhtiyār over his cousin ʿAdud al-Dawla. This, of course, was an exceedingly unwise action, if it took place in the way Miskawayh describes, since it was guaranteed to provoke ʿAdud al-Dawla into a second intervention in Iraq.⁵⁰

Yahyā b. Saʿīd says that prior to Rukn al-Dawla's death at the beginning of A.H. 366 (=on or after August 30, 976), Bakhtiyār was still fulfilling one condition of the agreement with ʿAdud al-Dawla. The khutba continued to be given in his name in Baghdad. The implication of

Yahyā's statement is that Bakhtiyār failed to obey ʿAdud al-Dawla's orders and contrived to conclude alliances against ʿAdud al-Dawla. Thus, Bakhtiyār was clearly guilty of contravening the pact he had signed in 364/975. Given the situation, this dual course--nominally recognizing ʿAdud al-Dawla but actually preparing to resist him--may have appeared the most prudent course to Bakhtiyār since he perceived ʿAdud al-Dawla's intentions toward him as obviously hostile. However, contrary to Miskawayh's statement, Yahyā says that only after the death of Rukn al-Dawla did Bakhtiyār dispute ʿAdud al-Dawla's right to the supreme amirate and arrogate the titular leadership of the family to himself.⁵¹

Both Miskawayh and Yahyā b. Saʿīd state that Bakhtiyār inspired the Caliph al-Taʾī to write an official letter, which confirmed Bakhtiyār's pretention to leadership and supremacy among the other Būyid amīrs. This document has survived in a collection of letters belonging to Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm al-Ṣābī.⁵² The date, which is given at the end of the letter, Saturday, 12 Jumādā I, 366/ January 6, 977, appears to verify Yahyā's statement that Bakhtiyār first disputed ʿAdud al-Dawla's right to the supreme amirate only after Rukn al-Dawla's death. Probably by Jumādā I, 366 Bakhtiyār had arrived at a point where he could no longer see any desirable alternative to outright opposition to ʿAdud al-Dawla.

As we are completely in the dark concerning developments from Rukn al-Dawla's recognition of ^CAdud al-Dawla as the next supreme amir at Isfahan sometime during 365/975-976 until the issuance of this letter despite Miskawayh's strategic placement throughout this period, we are not able to say exactly what prompted the writing of the letter, which was tantamount to a declaration of war. It does not seem unlikely, however, that Miskawayh falsified the date of the Caliph's proclamation of Bakhtiyār as the leading member of the Būyid family in order to represent him as culpable for the hostilities which broke out in A.H. 366/976-977 although it was ^CAdud al-Dawla who actually took the offensive.

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd gives no information to complement Miskawayh's narrative, which, ordinarily so detailed, is unusually vague on the exact concatenation of events prior to actual fighting between Bakhtiyār and ^CAdud al-Dawla.

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd and Miskawayh, however, agree that ^CAdud al-Dawla took the first step in initiating hostilities by preparing to invade Iraq. Bakhtiyār and Ibn Baqiyya reached Wāsiṭ, 29 Jumādā II, 366/ February 22, 977 on their way to Ahwāz where they hoped to make a stand. ^CAdud al-Dawla's vanguard left Fārs for Iraq in Sha^Cbān, 366/ March 25-April 22, 977; Bakhtiyār then proceeded to Ahwāz. The Caliph al-Ṭā'i^C consented to

join Bakhtiyār and Ibn Baqiyya on the condition that he would use his office only for the purpose of negotiating peace, not for lending legitimacy to their cause.⁵³ At this point, Miskawayh and Yahyā apparently had their mutual source available to them; both say that:

When al-Ta'i^C saw that the situation had led to war he refused to remain and set out in the direction of Baghdad. Bakhtiyār and Ibn Baqiyya exerted themselves in order that he would remain. He declined.⁵⁴

^CAdud al-Dawla won a smashing victory over Bakhtiyār's army at Ahwāz, Sunday, 11 Dhū al-Qa^Cda, 366/ July 1, 977 (both authors give the same date). In the following year ^CAdud al-Dawla occupied Baghdad and definitively crushed Bakhtiyār at Qaṣr al-Jāṣṣ, 17 Shawwāl, 367/ May 28, 978. Bakhtiyār was executed or murdered after the battle; there are a number of different stories concerning how he died. His death ended ^CAdud al-Dawla's struggle to establish his right to rule Iraq directly.⁵⁵ It remained to present his actions in a guise that would show them as morally irreproachable and worthy of a ruler who bore the laqab "Crown of the Faith" (Tāj al-Milla).

A review of Miskawayh and Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's treatment of the history of the controversial three years 364-366/964-967 thus shows that textual congruencies are found in the accounts of the two authors only when

straightforward recapitulation of events is involved. Miskawayh's account is of exceptional value as that of a strategically located eyewitness source, one who also possessed a personal concept of history and a synthetic ability unrivalled in his time. Nevertheless, his history also includes gaps and interpretations, which almost certainly reflect his attachment to ^CAdud al-Dawla. No trace of these characteristics, including Miskawayh's personal bias in favor of ^CAdud al-Dawla, is apparent in Yahyā b. Sa^Cid's chronicle for these same years. This is conclusive evidence that Yahyā did not make use of the Tajārib al-Umam.

The following comparison of two passages concerning ^CAdud al-Dawla's release of Bakhtiyār, Friday, 28 Ramadān, 364/ June 11, 975 and the climate in which he departed for Shīrāz is a revealing example of Miskawayh's efforts to show ^CAdud al-Dawla favorably and to discredit Bakhtiyār.

Yahyā, 159/367:

واجتمع الى بختيار جيشه وعوام البلد
متعصبون له وارتفع صياحهم سرورا بتخليته
واشاروا الفتنة على فئاصروا عند الدولة
فسرز عن المدينة ناصدا الى بلاد بهشيراز
من اعمال فارس يوم الجمعة لخمس
ليالى خلون من شوال من السنة .

Miskawayh, Tajārib al-Umam, II, 352:

واجتمع الى بختيار جيشه وعوام البلد
والعيارون واثاروا الفتنة
وارتفع صياحهم وصياحهم وقد كان
عند الدولة (حفط) عليهم خزائنها
وجمع ما وجد لهم من الدواب والاشياء
فما شئ منها شئ حتى تسلموها كهيئتها يوم
فارقوها وسرز عند الدولة يوم الجمعة
لخمس ليالى خلون من شوال سنة ٣٦٤
من مدينة السلام قاصدا اعماله بفارس .

His army and the people of the city who took his part gathered to Bakhtiyār, and their shouts rang out in joy at his release. They broke into riot

against Fanākhusrāw

ʿAdud al-Dawla. He set out from the city on his way to his city, Shīrāz, among the provinces of Fārs, Friday, 5 Shawwāl of the year [364].

His army, the people of the city, and the vagabonds gathered to

Bakhtiyār. They broke into riot, and their yelling and screaming rang out.

ʿAdud al-Dawla had protected their coffers [those belonging to Bakhtiyār and his brothers] and all their houses and household furnishings, and nothing was missing from them in appearance when they received them back from the day they left them. ʿAdud al-Dawla set out Friday, 5 Shawwāl, 364 from the City of Peace on his way to his provinces in Fārs.

Thus, as soon as ʿAdud al-Dawla departed, rioting broke out in Baghdad. Miskawayh lumps the vagabonds (ʿayyarūn) among the groups that immediately rallied to Bakhtiyār. After the statement that the groups friendly to Bakhtiyār had broken into riot, Miskawayh has suppressed the words "against Fanākhusrāw ʿAdud al-Dawla." Miskawayh gives the impression that Bakhtiyār simply could not preserve the public order rather than that the riot was directed against ʿAdud al-Dawla, whose regime was unpopular in Baghdad. His statements also show that Bakhtiyār had the affection of the army or some part of it. This contradicts the statement ʿAdud al-Dawla made in his letter to Rukn al-Dawla, according to Yahyā b. Saʿīd, that the army loathed Bakhtiyār. Miskawayh also points out that

ʿAdud al-Dawla had scrupulously protected the possessions of Bakhtiyār and his brothers. This statement, which is absent in Yahyā's version, may have been added by Miskawayh. Thus, although both writers began with the same text, Miskawayh ends up presenting a more favorable picture of ʿAdud al-Dawla than does Yahyā.

Assuming that neither Miskawayh nor Yahyā b. Saʿīd had at his disposal a reworked, second-hand version of their mutual source, Yahyā must be regarded as the more likely of the two authors to have preserved the exact wording of the original. For he almost certainly was dependent on his source for knowledge of the events in question; they took place before his birth in a distant land. There is no conceivable reason for imagining that he was sympathetic to Bakhtiyār or adversely disposed toward ʿAdud al-Dawla.

Miskawayh to the contrary was a contemporary and participant in the actual events. He personally served under ʿAdud al-Dawla and later was a companion to his sons Ṣamsām al-Dawla and Bahā' al-Dawla.⁵⁶ Although the Tajārīb al-Umam breaks off in the midst of ʿAdud al-Dawla's reign, there is evidence to indicate that the final part was written after his death in 983.⁵⁷ How long after ʿAdud al-Dawla's death is unknown, but, in any case, it is completely within the realm of possibility that Miskawayh made use of a straightforward narrative

record of events as a foundation for his own colorful discourses on their actual causes and the historical background. Since the exact circumstances under which the Tajārib al-Umam was written are also unknown--M. S. Khan categorizes Miskawayh as an unofficial historian of the Būyid dynasty--it is extremely difficult to delineate where Miskawayh's reliability as an eyewitness ends and where the same caution should be exercised toward his account as is shown toward any political memoir.

However, the Tajārib al-Umam should not be regarded as a mere vehicle of propaganda. Such a singleminded purpose is confuted by the inclusion of such stories as an account of how ʿAdud al-Dawla instigated the army to make extortionate wage demands from Bakhtiyār, whom he simultaneously encouraged to resist these demands. ʿAdud al-Dawla promised his support to Bakhtiyār, whom he meanwhile instructed to threaten abdication if the army did not relinquish its demands. At the crucial moment, ʿAdud al-Dawla refused to rescue Bakhtiyār, whom he could then claim had abdicated of his own will.⁵⁸ Miskawayh includes this story although it does not enhance ʿAdud al-Dawla's image and rebuts the claim that Bakhtiyār abdicated voluntarily. It is hard to see what propagandistic interest it serves although perhaps it flatters ʿAdud al-Dawla's ability to control the course of affairs.

Presumably then Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd approximates more closely than does Miskawayh the original tone of their mutual source. This may have been written in a mood friendly to Bakhtiyār and the family of Mu^Cizz al-Dawla, but it was, as far as we can tell, a simple chronicle of events.

At present, it is impossible to identify either the historical work or its author. Previously, besides the history of Thābit b. Sinān, only one of Miskawayh's sources has been identified: the Kitāb al-Tājī by Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm al-Sābī.⁵⁹

A single fragment has survived from the Kitāb al-Tājī. It is known that it had a candidly propagandistic purpose. Abū Ishāq wrote it in ^CAdud al-Dawla's behalf when the Būyid amir was holding him prisoner.⁶⁰ Thus, the character of the Kitāb al-Tājī clearly distinguishes it from the source which Miskawayh and Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd used.

The chronicle of Hilāl b. al-Muḥassīn al-Sābī (d. 448/1056), the grandson of Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm al-Sābī, which continued Thābit b. Sinān's chronicle also cannot be considered as the source.⁶¹ Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī explicitly states that two different sets of passages, which apparently originated with the missing source in question, come from another source besides Hilāl al-Sābī, who was Sibṭ's principal source for the decade of the 970's and on into the eleventh century.⁶²

The two sets of passages describe the riots in 362/972-973, which led Bakhtiyār to give the order to set fire to the west bank areas of Baghdad, and the flight of Abū Taghlib in 368-369/978-979 to Fāṭimid Palestine where he died in battle. The story of his death, which Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī characterizes as the correct one in contrast to that given by Hilāl al-Ṣābī, also differs from that attributed to Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm al-Ṣābī by the contemporary Ghaznavid historian al-ʿUṭbī.⁶³ Abū Ishāq is believed to have been Hilāl's chief source for the period which the Kitāb al-Tājī and his history overlapped.

Therefore, it can be concluded that Yahyā b. Saʿīd and Miskawayh had direct access to an anonymous Iraqi source for, at least, the years between 362/972 and 369/979 when Miskawayh's history breaks off without explanation. The independence of Yahyā from Miskawayh strengthens the conclusion that for Iraqi events in the preceding period--roughly 938 to 970--Yahyā's source was Thābit b. Sinān by removing the basic objection to this hypothesis: that Yahyā drew directly on the Tajārib al-Umam for events which fell in the decade 360-369/970-979. Unfortunately, it cannot be demonstrated whether Yahyā b. Saʿīd continued to use the same source for his information of Iraqi affairs up to as late as 381/991 when he ceases to take notice of Iraq.

Ibn Zūlāq

Our discussion of Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's sources must shift at this point to Egypt, where it is possible to identify Yahyā's source for the Fāṭimid conquest of Egypt and the reign of the first Fāṭimid caliph, al-Mu^Cizz (358-365/967-975), and more tentatively for Muslim and dynastic events from 938 when Yahyā's "Continuation" begins up to the fall of the Ikhshīdid dynasty in 969.

Most of the Egyptian historical writers who treat the period in which Muḥammad b. Ṭughj al-Ikhshīd (323-334/935-946) and his successors ruled over Egypt, in which the transfer of power to the Fāṭimids took place, and in which al-Mu^Cizz reigned--a period extending from 935 to 975 in all--relied on the historical work of Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan b. Zūlāq al-Laythī (306-387/919-997). Their number embraced almost all the standard authors on Ikhshīdid Egypt: Ibn Taghrībirdī, Ibn Zāfir, al-Maqrīzī, Ibn Sa^Cīd, Ibn Khallikān, and al-Kindī.

Ibn Zūlāq's works included biographies of the Ikhshīdids Muḥammad b. Ṭughj and Kāfūr and the Fāṭimids Jawhar, al-Mu^Cizz, and al-^CAzīz.⁶⁴ He himself claims to have authored the biographies of Anujūr and ^CAlī, sons of Muḥammad b. Ṭughj, Kāfūr, Aḥmad b. ^CAlī b. al-Ikhshīd, and Jawhar in al-Kindī's Kitāb Umarā' Misr.⁶⁵ K. L. Tallqvist, who edited the fourth book of Ibn

Sa^Cīd's Kitāb al-Mughrib, found that Ibn Zūlāq was the source for all of Ibn Sa^Cīd's biographies of the Ikhshīdids.⁶⁶

Al-Maqrīzī drew on Ibn Zūlāq extensively. In the Itti^Cāz al-Munafā' bi Akhbār al-A'imma al-Fātimīyīn al-Khulafā' al-Maqrīzī claimed that he had used Ibn Zūlāq's Sirāt al-Mu^Cizz [ā sīra(t) is a biography] in the author's own hand and proudly boasted of the reliability of one, like Ibn Zūlāq, who was actually present at the events he described, over one who merely relied on the historians of Syria and Iraq.⁶⁷ Abū al-Mahāsin b. Taghrībirdī also appears to have had direct access to Ibn Zūlāq.⁶⁸

Ibn Zāfir never explicitly cites Ibn Zūlāq as one of his sources, but André Ferré, who recently edited the Fātimid history in Ibn Zāfir's Akhbār al-Duwal al-Munqa^Cṭa, concluded, "It would be very surprising if our author, first of all was not acquainted with [the work of Ibn Zūlāq] (since it is cited abundantly in the following centuries), and, being acquainted with it, did not draw a great part of the facts he reports from this contemporary witness."⁶⁹

Ibn Khallikān frequently cited Ibn Zūlāq and gave his biography in the Wafayāt al-A^Cyān.⁷⁰ Besides the titles of his writings, however, little is known about his life. This is unfortunate; for Ibn Zūlāq, by all

appearances, was the pre-eminent Egyptian historian of the tenth century.

In these circumstances it would not be strange if Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd also had consulted the writings of Ibn Zūlāq, who died only a few years before Yahyā reached manhood. It is not difficult to demonstrate the dependence of Yahyā on Ibn Zūlāq at one point--the death of the eunuch Kāfūr, the actual ruler of Egypt, 946-967.

The following congruent passages can be traced to Ibn Zūlāq via Ibn Taghrībirdī, who explicitly cites Ibn Zūlāq in the paragraph preceding the one cited here. Probably the source of this information on the arrangements made by Kāfūr's subordinates for a smooth transition of sovereignty was Ibn Zūlāq's Sīrat al-Mu^Cizz or Sīrat al-Jawhar, which may have begun the story of the Fāṭimid conquest of Egypt at the death of Kāfūr. The Sīrat al-Jawhar may have formed part of the Sīrat al-Mu^Cizz. Ibn Sa^Cīd and Ibn Khallikān, who also reported these events, have the same story, originating with Ibn Zūlāq, but Ibn Khallikān gave his summary of it at the end of his biography of Muḥammad b. Ṭughj, which argues for the Sīrat Muḥammad b. Ṭughj as its source.⁷¹ It seems that no definitive conclusion is possible. These quotations, incidentally, also demonstrate Ibn Zāfir's reliance on Ibn Zūlāq.

Yahyā's account of Jawhar's successful invasion of Egypt in June and July, 969 agrees with that in other

Yahyā, 113/811:

Ibn Tagrībirdī, IV, 9,10:

Ibn Zāfir, Wüstenfeld, IV, 61:

ومات كافور الاخشيدى الخصى صاحب مصر
يوم الثلاثاء لعشر بقرين من جمدى الاول من
السنة ونصب فى الامارة بعده بصر ابو فارس
احمد بن على الاخشيد وكان طفلاً عمره احد
عشر سنة على ان يخلفه ابن عمّ ابيه الحسن
بن عبد الله بن طنج وكان يوشك بالشام
ويكون تدبير الرجال الى شمول وتدبير
الاموال الى الوزير ابن الفضل جعفر بن الفضل
بن الفرات بن حنّاية وزير كافور . . .

ولما توفى كافور اجتمع القوّار والطلّمان
الاخشيدية و تحالفوا ان لا يختلفوا ثم عقدوا
الرياسة لاحمد بن على بن الاخشيد و هو ابن
احدى عشرة سنة واستخلفوا له ابن عمّ ابيه
الحسن بن عبيد الله بن طنج وهو يوشك
قد تغلب على الشام نايبه على دمشق و جعلوا
تدبير الرجال الى شمول الاخشيدى و تدبير
الاموال الى جعفر ابن حنّاية الوزير و ذلك
فى يوم وفاة كافور وهو لم يدفن بعد ثم دفن .

وجعل التدبير بصر فيما يتعلق بالاموال الى
الوزير ابي الفضل جعفر بن الفرات ، وما يتعلق
بالرجال والعساكر لشمول الاخشيدى صاحب
الحمام بصر . وكل ذلك كان فى يوم الثلاثاء
لعشر بقرين من جمادى الاولى سنة سبع و
خمس مئتين و ثلثمائة . انتهى كلام ابن زولاقي رضى
الله عنه .

* sic.

Yahyā, 113/811:

Kāfur al-Ikhshīdī the eunuch, the ruler of Egypt, died

Tuesday, 20 Jumādā I of the year, and Abū al-Fawāris

Aḥmad b. ^CAlī al-Ikhshīd was installed in the imāra after him, and he was an eleven-year old child, on the condition that the son of his father's uncle al-Hasan b.

^CAbdallah b. Tughj, at that time in Syria, would succeed him, and Shamūl had command of the troops and the vizir Abū al-Fadl b.

al-Furāt b. Hinzāba, Kāfur's vizir, had the administration of the finances.

Ibn Taghribirdi, IV, 9-10:

He [Ibn Zūlāq] said: "When Kāfur died, his close associates gathered and compacted not to quarrel, and they wrote a document to this effect the hour of

Kāfur's death and they conferred the wilāya (sovereignty) on Aḥmad b. ^CAlī

al-Ikhshīd, and he was at that time a lad of eleven years--and Kāfur was still in his palace unburied--and he was invoked in the pulpits of Miṣr and its

territories and the territories of Syria and the two Holy Places, then, after him,

al-Hasan b. ^CUbaydallāh. Then al-Hasan b. ^CUbaydallāh was wed to the daughter

of his uncle, Fāṭima, daughter of the Ikhshīd, through a proxy whom he sent from Syria. The administration in Egypt, in that which pertained to the finances,

was conferred upon the vizir, Abū al-Fadl Ja^Cfar b. al-Furāt and, in that which pertained to men and soldiers on

Samūl al-Ikhshīdī, commissioner of the baths in Cairo. And all this was on

Tuesday, 20 Jumādā I, 357." The statement of Ibn Zūlāq, may God be pleased with him, ended [here].

Ibn Zāfir, Wüstenfeld, IV, 61:

When Kāfur died, the military leaders and Ikhshīdīd ghulāms gathered together and vowed not to quarrel, and conferred the riyāsa [leadership] on Aḥmad

b. ^CAlī b. al-Ikhshīd, and he was an eleven year-old boy, and they appointed as successor to him the son of his father's

uncle, al-Hasan b. ^CUbaydallāh

b. Tughj, who at that time had seized the government of Syria, as his representative over Damascus. They conferred the command of the troops on

Shamūl al-Ikhshīdī and the administration of finances on

Ja^Cfar b. Hinzāba, the vizir,

and this was the day of

Kāfur's death, and he was not yet buried. Then he was buried.

sources, but he is more detailed than any other author but al-Maqrīzī. Briefly, Ibn Zūlāq's description of the campaign as preserved in al-Maqrīzī's Itti^cāz and Yahyā went thus: The Kāfūriyya and Ikhshīdiyya, two bodies of military retainers or ghulāms whose loyalty and actual ownership belonged respectively to Kāfūr and Muhammad b. Tughj and his sons, originally decided on peaceful surrender, but after Jawhar had granted them security (amān), they refused it. Placing Nihrīr Shūwayzān in command over themselves, their army went out to Gīza to meet Jawhar's force. The battle centered on the fords at Munya Shalqān and Munyat al-Ṣiyādīn. Al-Maqrīzī says that Jawhar's force first crossed at Munya Shalqān (modern Shalqān) 15 Sha^cbān, 358/July 4, 969.⁷² The Ikhshīdiyya went out at afternoon prayer (ḥaṣr) to reinforce their army. By evening prayer (ḥaṣr) they were back in Cairo in full flight, having lost the crucial battle to Jawhar at Munya Shalqān.

Nihrir Shūwayzān, according to Yahyā, went to his house, gathered some portable possessions, and joined the Ikhshīdiyya and Kāfūriyya in flight toward Syria the same night.⁷³ Meanwhile, Jawhar camped where Cairo was to be built, opposite Kāfūr's gardens, before making his triumphal entry into al-Fustāt, 17 Sha^cbān, 358/July 6, 969.⁷⁴ The accounts given by Yahyā b. Sa^cīd and al-Maqrīzī are sufficiently similar to be convincing proof

of reliance on a common source, which must be Ibn Zūlāq's Sīrat al-Mu^Cizz.⁷⁵ Al-Maqrīzī states that he found the Sīrat al-Mu^Cizz in al-Kindī's Itmām Akhbār Umārā' Miṣr and that it served as his source for the reign of al-Mu^Cizz in Egypt.⁷⁶ This leads to the unavoidable conclusion that Yahyā also used the Sīrat al-Mu^Cizz.

Despite some seemingly inexplicable contradictions between the various authors drawing their information on al-Mu^Cizz from the Sīrat al-Mu^Cizz, a standard version of the general course of events between the Fātimid conquest in July, 969 and al-Mu^Cizz's death in December, 975 can be constructed from Yahyā and the other sources for al-Mu^Cizz's reign in Egypt.⁷⁷

The defeat and capture of al-Ḥasan b. ^CUbaydallāh, the senior member of the Ikhshīdīd family, who was governing Syria, took place at Ramla, 15 Rajab, 359/May 24, 970. A fugitive Ikhshīdīd ghulām Tibr fled from Egypt and was captured at Tyre in Ramadān or Shawwāl, 359/July 8-Sept. 4, 970; Ja^Cfar b. Falāh, Jawhar's lieutenant to whom the invasion of Syria was entrusted, captured Damascus, but a Qarmatian force, supported by Ikhshīdīd refugees and the Ḥamdānīd amir of Mosul Abū Taghlib defeated Ibn Falāh, who was killed. In Rabī^C I, 361/Dec. 22, 971-Jan. 21, 972, the Qarmatians invaded Egypt. Two major battles took place between the invaders and the Fātimid defenders of Cairo before the Qarmatians withdrew

to Syria; al-Mu^Cizz arrived at Cairo, Tuesday, 5 Ramaḍān, 362/June 9, 973.⁷⁸ A second Qarmatian invasion of Egypt took place in Rajab and Sha^Cbān, 363/March 28-May 25, 974. ^CAbdallāh, al-Mu^Cizz's son and appointed successor (wālī ^Cahd), commanded the Fāṭimid force that routed al-Ḥasan al-^CAṣam's army of Qarmatian fanatics outside of Cairo.

Al-Mu^Cizz died in Rabī^C II, 365, but the exact date is at issue. Nearly all the chroniclers say that his death fell on a Friday but give different dates for the day. The date Yahyā gives, after a necessary correction has been made in the text,⁷⁹ is 11 Rabī^C II, 365, which corresponds with that given by Ibn al-Dawādārī, a fourteenth-century Egyptian author, and two western authors, Ibn Ḥammād and Ibn ^CIdhārī.⁸⁰ Al-Maqrīzī gives three dates, the eleventh, thirteenth, and sixteenth.⁸¹ In Rabī^C II, 365, Friday fell on the ninth and sixteenth.⁸² The date of al-Mu^Cizz's death then must have been 16 Rabī^C II, 365/Dec. 23, 975. Ibn Zūlāq's original account either ignored the date or somehow confused it. Perhaps the fact that al-Mu^Cizz's death was concealed until the following ^CId al-Nahr (feast of sacrifice) on 10 Dhū al-Ḥijja/August 9, 976 explains the uncertainty about this date.

This reconstruction of events in the reign of al-Mu^Cizz follows that of Ibn Zūlāq's original Sīrat

al-Mu^Cizz. The chronicles which drew on the sīra for al-Mu^Cizz's reign are in substantial agreement on the facts included in the preceding summary of it. Yahyā for one was certainly among those who made use of this famous contemporary report.

Although a biography of al-^CAzīz (365-386/975-996), al-Mu^Cizz's successor, is thought to have been among Ibn Zūlāq's writings, there is no evidence that Yahyā was acquainted with it. In fact, Yahyā pays little attention to al-^CAzīz's reign.

Yahyā's interest in Egyptian history prior to Jawhar's expedition centers on the local Christians. However, the little he has to say about the central Egyptian government under Muḥammad b. Ṭughj al-Ikhshīd, his sons, and the major domo Kāfūr may go back to Ibn Zūlāq's biography of Muḥammad b. Ṭughj or Kāfūr or both. Since Yahyā's information on the Ikhshīdids is so brief, it is difficult to discuss the sources for the period of their rule. Yahyā begins his "Continuation" three years after Muḥammad b. Ṭughj had come to power in 935 and makes sporadic references to the Ikhshīdids through the Fāṭimid conquest in 969.

The available evidence consists of the series of dates that Yahyā gives for the Ikhshīdid rulers' deaths and a group of quotations which differentiate similarly between the types of authority Kāfūr and the offspring of Muḥammad b. Ṭughj possessed.

Although it might seem that authors would agree on a date, if nothing else, actually the reverse is true. A date taken from one and the same source by many different authors and copyists is often changed in transmittal and transcription. The variants which occur in the chronicles having Thābit b. Sinān as a source exemplify this tendency of dates to become altered.

For the decease of Muḥammad b. Ṭughj al-Ikhshīd, Yahyā, Ibn Zāfir, and Ibn Taghrībirdī all give the same date, 21 Dhū al-Hijja, 334/July 24, 946.⁸³

According to Yahyā, Anujūr b. Muḥammad b. Ṭughj died on Saturday, 9 Dhū al-Qa^Cda, 349. Since the ninth of Dhū al-Qa^Cda was a Monday in 349, Yahyā must actually have written the seventh which later was mistranscribed as a nine. This is an example of the common orthographic confusion in Arabic between seven and nine. Ibn Taghrībirdī gave the date Saturday, 7 or 8 Dhū al-Qa^Cda and al-Kindī Sunday, 8 Dhū al-Qa^Cda. Ibn Khallikān wrote, "Anujūr died Saturday the eighth, and it is said: the seventh, Dhū al-Qa^Cda, 349," so there was confusion even among those who assuredly were acquainted with Ibn Zūlāq's work. Probably Anujūr passed away on 7 Dhū al-Qa^Cda, 349, a Saturday as Yahyā, Ibn Taghrībirdī, and Ibn Khallikān say.⁸⁴

Yahyā, al-Kindī, Ibn Khallikān, and Ibn Taghrībirdī all give the same date for the death of Abū

al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. al-Ikhshīd, 11 Muḥarram, 355/January 7, 966.⁸⁵ At this point Kāfūr began to rule in his own name.

For the date of Kāfūr's death, 20 Jumādā I, 357/April 22, 968, there is agreement between Yahyā, Ibn Khallikān, Ibn Zāfir, and Ibn Taghrībirdī.⁸⁶

The quotations which were compared earlier concerning Kāfūr's death and the events following it are substantial proof of the use made by Yahyā and the other authors mentioned here of the same material for the final part of the Ikhshīdīd period. In light of this and the death dates Yahyā gives for Muḥammad b. Ṭuḡh, Anujūr, ʿAlī b. al-Ikhshīd, and Kāfūr, which are identical with those of authors who are known to have had Ibn Zūlāq as their source for the Ikhshīdīd period, it is useful to examine six quotations, two from Yahyā and one each from Ibn Zāfir, al-Kindī, Ibn Taghrībirdī, and Ibn Saʿīd.

Yahyā, 68/766:

و دخل كافور الخادم الاخشيدى الى مصر
فادما من دمشق فأجلس أبا القاسم اونجور
ابن مولاة في الامارة وكان كافور الغالب على
الامور والمدير لها.

Coming from Damascus Kāfūr
al-Ikhshīdī the eunuch
entered Egypt and installed
Awnujūr [sic] the son of
his master in the imāra

Ibn Zāfir, Wüstenfeld, IV, 58:

ولما توفي الاخشيد عقدت البيعة لولده ابي
القاسم اونجور و تسميه محمود و غلب على امره
استاذ ابيه ابوالمسك كافور الاخشيدى.

When the Ikhshīd died, a pledge
of allegiance was taken in
behalf of his son Abū al-Qāsim
Awnujūr [sic] and his represen-
tative was Mahmūd and his

[the position of power or prince], and Kāfur was in control of affairs and was the administrator of them.

father's ustādh Abū al-Misk Kāfur al-Ikhshīdī was in control of his business.

Yahyā, 83/781:

وتفقد الامارة بعده اخوه ابو الحسن على بن
الاخشيد وكان اسم الامارة واقعا عليه والغالب
على الامور كافور الخادم غلام ابيه.

Al-Kindī, 296:

ابو الحسن على بن الاخشيد دعى له يوم
الجمعة ثالث عشر ذى القعدة سنة تسع
واربعين وثلثمائة و الناظر في البلد
والمستولى على الدولة كافور.

After him [Anūjūr] his
brother Abū al-Ḥasan ^cAlī b.
al-Ikhshīd assumed the imāra.
It was the name of the imāra
that fell upon him, and
Kāfur, the eunuch, his
father's ghulam, was in control of affairs.

God was invoked in favor of
Abū al-Ḥasan ^cAlī b. al-
Ikhshīd, 13 Dhū al-Qa^cda, 349
[January 15, 960], and Kāfur
was the administrator of the
land and master of the state.

Ibn Taghrībirdī, III, 326:

وصار كافور الاخشيدى هو القائم بتدبير مملكته
والمصرف فيها كما كان آتاهم اخيه أنوجور.

Ibn Sa^cīd, 46:

من كتاب القرطى انه لما مات اونوجور قدم
ارباب الدولة الاخشيدية اخاه عليا وكان حكمه
في غلبة كافور عليه كمحكم اخيه المتقدم قبله.

Kāfur al-Ikhshīdī took care
of the administration of the
state [for ^cAlī b. al-
Ikhshīd] and was the independent administrator of it,
as he was in the days of
[^cAlī's] brother Anūjūr.

According to the book of al-
Qurtī when Awnūjūr [sic] died,
the leaders of the Ikhshīdīd
state made his brother ^cAlī
ruler, and Kāfur was in control of his government, even
as he was the governor of his
brother before him.

Each of these six quotations make clear that although the Ikhshīd's sons were the legitimate rulers, it was Kāfūr who actually disposed of true power. Ibn Zāfir and Ibn Sa^cīd as well as Yahyā use the word ghalaba, or derivative forms of it, to refer to Kāfūr's actual possession of the government. Ghalaba could also mean that Kāfūr had seized or usurped the young Ikhshīdids' power. For our discussions here it is important only that Ibn Zāfir and Ibn Sa^cīd, like Yahyā, use the same word to denote the quality of Kāfūr's power. Although al-Kindī and Ibn Taghrībirdī do not use this word, they leave no doubt that Kāfūr was the real ruler while Anujūr and ^cAlī b. al-Ikhshīd were only figureheads.

Thus, there are indications that Yahyā relied on Ibn Zūlāq for his information on the Ikhshīdids: several dates corresponding to those relying on Ibn Zūlāq and the same tendency to separate the actual power of Kāfūr from the nominal authority of the Ikhshīdid successors. The evidence is too slight to show that Yahyā definitely drew his Ikhshīdid information from Ibn Zūlāq, but he is the most probable source. However, Yahyā's use of Ibn Zūlāq's Sīrat al-Mu^cizz, as has been shown above, is a certainty.

Appendix to Chapter 2:

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's Reliance on Thābit b. Sinān
as a Source

Numerous congruencies found in the texts of Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's "Continuation" and Miskawayh's Tajārib al-Umam are noted below. In many cases other authors who depended on Thābit b. Sinān contain the same passages as Yahyā or Yahyā and Miskawayh. They are also cited. Numbers eight, seventeen, twenty-two, twenty-four, twenty-seven, and thirty-four refer to passages in Yahyā taken from Thābit b. Sinān for which there are no parallels in Miskawayh. These examples demonstrate Yahyā's direct access and use of Thābit b. Sinān's history.

1. On the appointment of Ibn Rā'iq as amīr al-umārā' and the evisceration of the office of vizir in 324 A.H. Yahyā 13,14/711,712=Miskawayh, I, 351,352.
2. Bajkām's entrance into Baghdad. Yahyā, 14/712, gives the month Dhū al-Qa'da, 326 A.H. Al-Hamadhānī, 110, Miskawayh, I, 396, give the date 12 Dhū al-Qa^Cda.
3. Death of the vizir Ibn al-Furāt b. Hinzāba. Miskawayh, I, 409=Yahyā, 14,15/712,713. Only Yahyā gives the date, Jumāda I, 327 A.H., or the date of the appointment of Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Barīdī as vizir, 6 Rajab, 327.
4. Yahyā, 21-23/719-721, Miskawayh, I, 414 describe in almost identical phrases Ibn Rā'iq's return of the corpse of Ibn Tughj's brother to Ibn Tughj in 327 A.H.

5. Yahyā, 23/721=Miskawayh, I, 413 on the deposal of Abū ^CAbdallāh Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Barīdī, 20 Dhū al-Qa^Cda, 328 and his replacement by Abū al-Qāsim Sulayman b. al-Hasan b. al-Makhlad. Both authors mention that al-Barīdī had only the name of vizir, Ibn Shirzād having been the actual administrator of affairs. Ibn al-Athīr, VIII, 369, al-Hamadhānī, 116.
6. Death of al-Rādī, 15 Rabī^C I, 329. Yahyā, 23/721=Miskawayh, I, 417. Elias of Nišībīn, 145.
7. The machinations surrounding the nomination of the caliph al-Muttaqī. Yahyā has abbreviated the account, appearing in Miskawayh and copied by al-Hamadhānī, on one point - that the Muslim community could not reach a decision and that the next day al-Kūfī, the acting vizir, produced Bajkāṁ's letter nominating the future al-Muttaqī. Yahyā, 24/722=Miskawayh, II, 2, al-Hamadhānī, 119, Ibn al-Athīr, VIII, 368.
8. The famine in Baghdad in A.H. 329. Yahyā's version, differing slightly from Miskawayh's, is found in Ibn al-Jawzī, VI, 318, and Ibn al-Athīr, VIII, indicating Thābit b. Sinān as the source. Yahyā, 25/723=Miskawayh, II, 8.
9. Death of Bajkāṁ. Yahyā has for the date "seven (nights) remaining in Rajab" whereas Miskawayh has "nine (nights) remaining in Rajab". Otherwise Yahyā and Miskawayh's stories are easily reconcilable. Al-Hamadhānī, 126, gives the date as "Wednesday, nine (nights) remaining in Rajab". Ibn al-Jawzī, VII, 322 also has nine. The confusion of sab^C (seven) with tis^C (nine) is a frequent problem in Arabic orthography as the two numbers are written almost identically. There was a changeover in the administration. Al-Muttaqī took Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Maymūn as vizir.

10. Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Maymūn resigned the title of vizir in favor of Abū ^CAbdallāh Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Barīdī, 329 A.H. Yahyā, 26/724=Miskawayh, II,15.
11. The Turkish military faction in Baghdad appointed Takinek as their leader; the Dailamite faction appointed Kūrtakīn, according to Yahyā, Kurankij, according to Miskawayh. Both Yahyā and Miskawayh give the same story of Dailamite-Turkish co-operation, causing al-Barīdī to flee on the last day of Ramadān. Ibn al-Athīr, VIII, 384 gives the name as Kūrtakīn, which agrees with Yahyā and not Miskawayh. Yahyā, 26/724=Miskawayh, II,17.
12. Al-Muttaqi conferred a khila^C on Kurankij/Kūrtakīn Thursday, 3 Shawwāl, 329, and appointed him amir al-umarā'. ^CAbd al-Rahmān b. ^CIsā administered affairs without the title of vizir, but only for nine days, then Abū Ishāq Muhammad b. Ahmad al-Qarārītī took over administration. Al-Qarārītī was seized. (Not Kūrtakīn as Vasiliev-Krachkovskii have it; the Arabic text of Yahyā must be emended to qabada ^Calayhi in place of qabada ^Calā). Abū Ja^Cfar Muhammad b. Qāsim al-Karkhī became vizir. Yahyā, 26, 27/724,725=Miskawayh, II, 18,20.
13. Miskawayh and Yahyā say in almost identical passages that al-Muttaqī wrote to Ibn Rā'iq at Aleppo, inviting him to Baghdad, and that Abū Muhammad b. Hamdān, the future Nāṣir al-Dawla paid Ibn Rā'iq 100,000 dinars. Yahyā, 725=Miskawayh, II,20.
14. Yahyā, 28/726, and Miskawayh, II, 22, in almost identical phrasing say that al-Kūfī came out of hiding after Kurankij/Kūrtakīn's defeat and re-entered Ibn Rā'iq's service and that he directed affairs without the title of vizir.

15. Ibn Rā'iq's Turkish troops revolted against him and headed for Wāsīt to join al-Barīdī, who received the vizirate, 15 Rabī^C II, 330/ Jan. 7, 942. Yahyā, 29/727=Miskawayh, II, 23.

16. Yahyā says the title of vizir was restored to al-Qarārītī before Ahmad ibn al-Barīdī met Ibn Rā'iq in a battle which took place 9 Jumādā II, 329/March, 11, 940. Al-Muttaqī and Ibn Rā'iq went to meet ^CAlī and al-Hasan, the two sons of Hamdān. Al-Hasan had Ibn Rā'iq killed. Al-Muttaqī conferred the title of Nāṣir al-Dawla on al-Hasan b. Hamdān and made him amīr al-umarā'. Al-Barīdī fled from Baghdad before al-Muttaqī and Nāṣir al-Dawla reached it. When al-Barīdī had gathered his troops, he returned, and there was a battle between the troops of al-Barīdī and ^CAlī b. Hamdān on Tuesday, 30 Dhū al-Qa^Cda and 1,2,3 Dhū al-Hijja (Yahyā says only Dhū al-Qa^Cda, 330.) ^CAlī b. Hamdān was the victor and al-Barīdī fled toward Wāsīt, and then to Basra. Al-Muttaqī bestowed the title Sayf al-Dawla on ^CAlī b. Hamdān. Nāṣir al-Dawla seized the vizir al-Qarārītī, confiscated his properties, and invested Ahmad b. ^CAbdallāh al-Isfahānī 18 Rajab, 331. Al-Kūfī continued to administer affairs. The Turks at Wāsīt revolted against Sayf al-Dawla and proclaimed Tūzūn their leader. Nāṣir al-Dawla left Baghdad, and al-Kūfī went into hiding. Al-Qarārītī administered affairs in the capital without the title of vizir. Then the administration and all the provinces were again entrusted to Ibn Muqla.

Tūzūn appointed Ibn Shirzād in place of al-Karkhī to administer his affairs without the title of vizir. (Miskawayh does not mention that Ibn Muqla was reappointed to administer affairs, but only that Tūzūn commissioned him as tax farmer of his estates at 130,000 dinars a year.) Yahyā 29-32/727-730=Miskawayh, II, 23-30, 37-45.

17. The reclamation of the Holy Mandilion in 331/944, a towel on which the imprint of Christ's visage was visible. Miskawayh does not speak of the incident, but Ibn al-Athīr, VIII, 405, 331 A.H., al-Hamadhānī, 135, 136, Ibn al-Jawzī, al-Muntazām, VI, 331, Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī, B.M. 4619, f. 129 all give visibly related accounts, which indicates that Thābit b. Sinān was the common source, to whom also Elias of Nišībīn, 145 attributes his notice. Yahyā, 32-34/730-732.

18. Al-Muttaqī, having become wary of Tūzūn, departed from Baghdad with his secretaries and military officers. Tūzūn dispatched one thousand men under Mūsā b. Sulaymān. When Sayf al-Dawla marched downriver, Tūzūn met him in a battle of several days duration below Takrīt. Sayf al-Dawla retreated 20 Rabī^c II, 332/Dec. 28, 943, a Thursday. Miskawayh states only that he fled on a Thursday; Ibn al-Athīr, VIII, 407, A.H. 332, supplies the missing date, which corresponds to Yahyā's. Tūzūn was the victor in a second battle between Takrīt and Mosul. Yahyā, 35, 36/733, 734=Miskawayh, II, 48, 49. Elias of Nišībīn credits his similar account to Thābit b. Sinan.

19. There are verbal similarities between Miskawayh and Yahyā's accounts of the negotiations between al-Muttaqī and Tūzūn (Yahyā, 36/734, l. 6-7=Miskawayh, II, 67, l. 12-13; Yahyā, 37/735, l. 1=Miskawayh, II, 68, l. 2).

20. Yahyā, 38, 39/736, 737 and Ibn al-Jawzī, VI, 339, agree that Tūzūn deposed al-Muttaqī on Saturday, 19 Ṣafar, 333/ Oct. 10, 944. On the same day Tūzūn chose al-Mustakfī to replace al-Muttaqī. Miskawayh's story, II, 69-72, generally agrees with Yahyā's. Also Elias of Nišībīn, 145, 146. Both Ibn al-Jawzī and Yahyā have preserved a dating inaccuracy; 19 Ṣafar was a Friday, not a Saturday.

21. Al-Mustakfī appointed Muḥammad b. ^CAlī al-Sāmarī as his vizir. Yahyā and Miskawayh say that he held only the title of vizir and Ibn Shirzād attended to the actual administration. Yahyā and Ibn al-Athīr, VIII, 421, 333 A.H. give the date 24 Ṣafar, 333 for his appointment. Yahyā gives the date of al-Sāmarī's dismissal and arrest, 7 Rabī^C II, 333, which agrees with Ibn al-Athīr's, VIII, 448. This is exactly forty-two days, the period Miskawayh gives for al-Sāmarī's vizirate. Yahyā, 40/738=Miskawayh, II, 78,80.

22. Yahyā's account of al-Mustakfī's deposal and al-Mutī^C's installation as caliph is related by Miskawayh, Ibn al-Athīr, and Ibn al-Jawzī. Yahyā and Ibn al-Jawzī, VI, 343 state that the length of al-Mustakfī's reign was one year, four months, two days. Miskawayh does not give this fact. Yahyā, 44,45/742, 743=Miskawayh, II, 86,87. Elias of Nišībīn, 146.

23. Mu^Cizz al-Dawla's expedition against Nāṣir al-Dawla, the Ḥamdānīd ruler of Mosul. Yahyā is alone in saying that Nāṣir al-Dawla's refusal to pay what he had paid to earlier amirs of Baghdad provoked the expedition. Otherwise his account (65,66/763, 764) appears related to Miskawayh, II, 89-96, al-Ḥamadhānī, 151-158.

24. The notices concerning the death of Muḥammad b. Tughj al-Ikhshīd are similar in Yahyā, 67/765 and Miskawayh, II, 104; both Yahyā and Ibn al-Jawzī, VI, 347 give the same place, Damascus, and the same date, 21 Dhū al-Hijja, 334, which Miskawayh does not mention.

25. Yahyā's account of Sayf al-Dawla's campaign to Kharshana in 339 and his ambush by the Byzantines is similar to that in all the printed sources based on Thābit b. Sinān. The similarities between the different

versions suggest that Yahyā has relied on Thābit b. Sinān as well as at least one other source. Yahyā, 70, 71/768, 769=Miskawayh, II, 125, 126. Elias of Nišībīn, 147, cites Thābit b. Sinān for this campaign.

26. The Qarmatians returned the Black Stone to the Ka^Cba in Mecca, Yahyā, 71/769=Miskawayh, II, 126. Ibn al-Athīr, VIII, 486, 339 A.H., restored the word rukn to bayt al-harām, which Yahyā preserved and Miskawayh omitted.

27. Elias of Nišībīn, 147, credits Thābit by Sinān with his brief notice of Sayf al-Dawla's victorious campaign of 342, including the capture of Constantine, son of the Domestic. Yahyā, 73/771, is fuller and calls Constantine by his surname Phocas. Miskawayh does not mention the campaign of 342.

28. 14 Jumādā II, 347, (Miskawayh) or 15 Jumādā I (Yahyā) Mu^Cizz al-Dawla marched from Baghdad to Mosul against Nāṣir al-Dawla, who was late in paying the promised tribute. Mu^Cizz al-Dawla's troops surprised two of Nāṣir al-Dawla's sons at Sinjār, but the two, Abū al-Murajjā and Hibatallāh, rallied their troops and counter-attacked, winning a victory. Nāṣir al-Dawla meanwhile fled to Mayyāfāriqīn, then to Aleppo where his brother Sayf al-Dawla gave him a warm welcome and mediated the dispute between Nāṣir al-Dawla and Mu^Cizz al-Dawla in 348 A.H. Mu^Cizz al-Dawla returned to Baghdad. Elias of Nišībīn, 148, under the years 347 and 348, gives an abbreviation of unmistakably the same story, naming as its source Thābit b. Sinān. Yahyā, 78/79/776,7=Miskawayh, II, 168-172, Ibn al-Athīr, VIII, 522-523, al-Hamadhānī, 172-174.

29. Sayf al-Dawla's expedition of 349 as far as Charsianon/Kharshana. Yahyā's account (83/781) has identical phrases with Miskawayh, II, 180 and al-Hamadhānī, 178, Ibn al-Athīr, VIII, 531-532, Elias, 148. Yahyā also used a Greek source which the other sources lacked.

30. Yahyā and Miskawayh give the same date for the death of the vizir al-Muhallabī, Saturday 26 Sha^Cbān, 352, and mention that Mu^Cizz al-Dawla charged two men with the administration, neither receiving the title of vizir. Miskawayh calls them Abū al-Fadl and Abū al-Faraj, Yahyā al-^CAbbās b. al-Husayn al-Shīrāzī and Muhammad b. al-^CAbbās Fasānjus. Elias, 149, says, "In (352 A.H.) died the vizir al-Muhallabī, and Abū al-Fadl al-Shīrāzī and Abū al-Faraj b. Fasānjus took his place." Elias attributes his notice to Thābit. Yahyā, 93/791=Miskawayh, II, 197, 198.

31. Najā, one of Sayf al-Dawla's ghulāms, revolted against his master and attacked Abū al-Ward, the ruler of Manzikert, Akhlāt, and Mush, and seized his castles and lands. Yahyā, 94/792=Miskawayh, II, 200-202.

32. Troops of Khurasanian ghāzīs in Cilicia in 353/964-965 dispersed because of the scarcity of food in the area of the thughūr and Aleppo and returned to Baghdad and Khurasan. Yahyā, 96/794=Miskawayh, II, 202, 203.

33. In 354 Nicephoros Phocas captured Maṣṣīṣa and Ṭarsūs. Yahyā's story differs frequently from Miskawayh's but, both authors apparently drew on Thābit b. Sinān, who described these events in Cilicia, according to Elias, 149. Yahyā, 98,99/796,797; Miskawayh, II, 210-211.

34. In Shawwāl, 355/Sept. 20 - Oct. 18 965. Nicephoros Phocas besieged Amida, killing and capturing multitudes, but he could not take the city and departed for Dārā and

Niṣībīn. The population of the latter city fled before him. After events which only Yahyā describes--the siege of Manbij, the taking of many prisoners at Wadī Butnān, the capture of Tīzīn and Ḥiṣn Artāḥ--Nicephoros besieged Antioch. Having failed to capture the city, he returned to Byzantine territory. Yahyā, 107, 108/805, 806, Ibn al-Athīr, VIII, 355, 572-573; Elias, 149, names Thābit b. Sinān as the source. Miskawayh does not mention the campaign.

35. In 358/Nov. 968 - Nov. 969, the Byzantines march out to Kafar Tūtā and killed many people and took many captives. From Kafar Tūtā they went on to Hims, which they plundered and burned. Elias, 150, Yahyā, 117/815, Ibn al-Athīr, VIII, 596-597, Ibn al-Jawzī, VII, 47.

36. The dismissal and arrest of Abū al-Faḍl al-^CAbbās b. al-Ḥusain al-Shīrāzī and the naming of Abū al-Faraj Muḥammad b. al-Abbās b. Fasānjus, 4 Jumādā II, 359 and the succession of Abū al-Faraj by Abū al-Faḍl 29/30 Rajab 360/May 28/29, 971. Miskawayh does not give the date of Abū al-Faḍl's arrest and deposal. Miskawayh, II, 263-269, 284; Elias, 150 under 360 A.H., al-Hamadhānī, 204, 208, Yahyā, 141/349.

Footnotes

¹Yahyā, PO, 10/708.

²In Vasiliev, Byzance et les Arabes, second (French) edition, II, 88-89, in which he rewrote and updated Vasiliev's notice on Yahyā b. Sa^cīd, Canard wrote, "It is not to be doubted that Yahya had Ibn Miskawaih before his eyes and that, as Rozen has already shown, thanks to some fragments of Miskawaih which were available to him, he has literally transcribed it." In his Histoire de la Dynastie des H'amdaniides de Jazīra et de Syrie (Algiers, 1951), 20, Canard wrote that "Yahyā offers a certain number of analogies with Miskawaih for the part of his history which goes up to 369. It seems that he has utilized him." Later, Canard was still more reflective: "The question of Yahyā's Muslim sources is. . .very complex. Notably, for the East one finds similarities with Ibn Miskawaih, for example." Sources Arabes de l'histoire Byzantine, Revue des Etudes Byzantines, 19 (1961), 302-303.

³Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 133-135.

⁴Habīb Zayyāt, "La vie du Patriarche Melkite Christophore (d. 967) par le protospathaire Ibrāhīm b. Yūhannā, Document Inédit du xe siècle", Proche-Orient Chrétien, 2 (1952), 11-38, 333-366.

⁵Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 075-089.

⁶Miskawayh, Kitāb Tajārib al-Umam (Book of the Experiences of the Nations) in H.F. Amedroz and D.S. Margoliouth, The Eclipse of the Abbasid Caliphate, I,II, trans.IV,V (Oxford, 1920,1921).

⁷M.S. Khan, "Miskawaih and Thābit b. Sinān", Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft, 117 (1967), 305.

⁸M.S. Khan, "Miskawaih and Arabic Historiography", Journal of the American Oriental Society, 89 (1969), 715, 717, 718.

⁹Khan, "Miskawaih and Thābit b. Sinān", ZDMG, 117 (1967), 306.

¹⁰Thābit b. Sinān, Akhbār al-Qarāmiṭa, ed. Suhayl Zakkār, (Beirut, 1971).

¹¹Ibn al-Athīr, Al-Kāmil fī al-Ta'rīkh, ed. C.J. Tornberg, (Leiden, 1853-1864). In this dissertation I have used the reprint by Dar al-Sader, Beirut, 1965, the pagination of which does not correspond to that of the original edition.

¹²Al-Hamadhānī, Takmila Ta'rīkh al-Tabarī, ed. A.Y. Kan'ān (Beirut, 1958).

¹³Ibn al-Jawzī, al-Muntazam fī Ta'rīkh al-Mulūk wa'l-Umam (Hyderabad, 1938-1940).

¹⁴Sibt b. al-Jawzī, Mir'āt al-Zamān, a vast historical work covering the whole history of Islam, preserved in numerous manuscripts.

¹⁵Al-Dhahabī, Ta'rīkh al-Islām, a historical work of similarly gigantic proportions, preserved in many manuscripts.

¹⁶C.H. Becker, Beiträge, II, 150-151.

¹⁷Khan, "Miskawaih and Thābit b. Sinān", ZDMG, 117 (1967), 309, 315.

¹⁸Miskawayh, Tajārib al-Umam, II, 136. Appendix I to this chapter provides verification of this statement. Twenty-six of the congruencies exhibited by Yahyā and Miskawayh pertain to the years before 340, only ten to the years following 340. Of course, these figures would only be significant if Yahyā actually made direct use of Thābit b. Sinān's chronicle, which, as we shall see, is the case.

¹⁹Ed. and trans. by F. Bāthgens, "Fragmenta Syrischer und Arabischer Historiker". Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, VIII, 3, 1884. See Vasiliev, Byzance et les Arabes, II, 2, 107 for a short sketch of the circumstances of its composition.

²⁰This list could conceivably include cases where Yahyā and Miskawayh used their other common source, which is discussed later in this section. I have tried to eliminate such confusions by analyzing content.

²¹See example number seventeen in the appendix to this chapter. Mandilion is a derivative of the Greek mandēlē, meaning towel.

²²Icon (Ayqūna) is the actual word Yahyā uses.

²³Rozen noted that Yahyā and Ibn al-Athīr--the only one of the sources following Thābit b. Sinān which was available to Rozen--undoubtedly had the same source for this episode, Imperator Vasilij, 395, fn. a. Canard identified Thābit b. Sinān as the original author of this passage, Dynastie des H'amdanides, 748, fn. 75.

²⁴In Bāthgen's translation. This portion of the chronicle is only in Syriac, which I do not read.

²⁵See fn. 2 above.

²⁶Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, #72, 134.

²⁷Yahyā, PO, 188-196/396-404; Miskawayh, Tajārib al-Umam, II, 378, 380-384, 386-388, 396-397, 401-404.

²⁸Ibn Zāfir, Akhbār al-Duwal al-Munqati'a, B. M. Or. 3685, 15a-15b; Ibn al-Dawādārī, Al-Durrat al-Mudīyya fī Akhbār al-Dawlat al-Fātimīyya, VI, Kanz al-Durar wa Jāmi' al-Ghurar, ed. Ṣalāh al-Dīn al-Munajjid, (Cairo, 1961), 191-195; al-Maqrīzī, Itti'āz, I, 250-252; Ibn al-Qalānisī, Dhayl Ta'rīkh Dimashq, ed. H. F. Amedroz (Damascus, 1908), 21-23.

²⁹On Miskawayh's career see the detailed discussion in Muhammed Arkoun, Contribution à l'étude de l'Humanisme Arabe au IVe/Xe Siècle: Miskawayh Philosophe et Historien, Etudes Musulmanes, XII (Paris, 1970), Chapter 2, pp. 55-99; also 48-56 on his activities after ^cAdud al-Dawla's death.

³⁰Franz Rosenthal, A History of Muslim Historiography, (second edition, Leiden, 1958), 142.

³¹See M. S. Khan, "Miskawaih and Arabic Historiography", Journal of the American Oriental Society, 89 (1969), 710-730; but especially pp. 728-729. Kahn writes, "In general [Miskawaih] attempts to achieve accuracy and impartiality and normally displays a conscientiousness and a desire to ascertain and record the real facts--and to refrain from distorting them with fanaticism and partisanship," but he concludes "[Miskawaih] clearly shows his partiality to ^CAdud al-Dawla against Abū 'l-Fath bin al-^CAmīd, Bakhtiyār, and Ibn Baqīyah and glorifies the Buwayhids at the expense of the Hamdānids."

³²See fn. 18 above.

³³Yahyā, PO, 146/354; Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī, Mir'āt al-Zamān, B. M. Or. 4619, 168r.

³⁴Miskawayh, Tajārib, II, 304; translation by Margoliouth, Eclipse, V, 326.

³⁵Yahyā, PO, 146-148/354-356; Miskawayh, Tajārib, II, 303-305; Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī, Mir'āt, B. M. Or. 4619, 168v-169v.

³⁶Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī, Mir'āt, B. M. Or. 4619, 166v.

³⁷For the title shāhānshāh, see W. Madelung, 'The Assumption of the Title Shāhānshāh by the Būyids and "the reign of the Daylam (Dawlat al-Daylam)"', Journal of Near Eastern Studies, 28 (1969), 90; Yahyā, PO, 200/408.

³⁸Yahyā, PO, 156, 185/ 364, 393.

³⁹Miskawayh, Tajārib, II, 313; translation by Margoliouth, Eclipse, V, 336.

⁴⁰Ibid., 345.

⁴¹Ibid.; translation by Margoliouth, Eclipse, V, 338.

⁴²Yahyā, PO, 151/359; Miskawayh, Tajārib, II, 323-327.

⁴³Yahyā, PO, 156/364; Miskawayh, Tajārib, II, 341-342; translation by Margoliouth, Eclipse, V, 369-371.

⁴⁴Miskawayh, Tajārib, II, 348-349.

⁴⁵Yahyā, PO, 158/366.

⁴⁶For Miskawayh's explanation of how Bakhtiyār happened to be put under house arrest, Miskawayh, Tajārib, II, 342-343; cf. Yahyā, PO, 156/364.

⁴⁷Yahyā, PO, 149-151/357-359.

⁴⁸Miskawayh, Tajārib, II, 350-351.

⁴⁹Miskawayh, Tajārib, II, 352; Yahyā, PO, 158-159/366-367.

⁵⁰Miskawayh, Tajārib, II, 361-366.

⁵¹Yahyā, PO, 185/393.

⁵²Al-Mukhtār min Rasā'il Abī Ishāq Ibrāhīm al-Sābī, ed. Shakīb Arslān, (reprinted Beirut, Lebanon, n.d.), 325.

⁵³Yahyā, PO, 185/393; Miskawayh, Tajārib, II, 366.

⁵⁴Yahyā, PO, 185-186/393-394; Miskawayh, Tajārib, II, 367.

⁵⁵Yahyā, PO, 187-188/395-396; Miskawayh, Tajārib, II, 380-381.

⁵⁶Arkoun, Contribution, 49-50, 76-82.

⁵⁷Ibid., 77-78.

⁵⁸Miskawayh, Tajārib, II, 342-343.

⁵⁹Khan, "Miskawaih and Arabic Historiography", 720-721; F. Krenkow, EI, IV, 20, asserted that Miskawayh anonymously drew on the Kitāb al-Tājī in pp. II, 21-22,

23, 53, 59, 86, 87, and 404 of the Arabic text of the Tajārib al-Umam. W. Madelung, "Abū Ishāq al-Ṣābī on the Alids of Ṭabaristān and Gilān, JNES," 26 (1967), 21, makes the statement that Miskawayh used the Kitāb al-Tajā extensively as a source for his own work.

⁶⁰W. Madelung, "Abū Ishāq al-Ṣābī", 18-20; Yāqūt, Irshād al-arīb ilā maʿrifat al-adīb, ed. D. S. Margoliouth (E. J. W. Gibb Memorial Series, London, 1907-1927), I, 325; Al-Thāʿalibī, Yatīmat al-dahr fī shuʿarā' ahl al-ʿasr, Damascus, n.d.), II, 38.

⁶¹C. Cahen, "Note d'historiographie syrienne, la première partie de l'histoire d'Ibn al-Qalānisi, Arabic and Islamic Studies in Honor of Hamilton A. R. Gibb, ed. G. Makdisi, (Leiden, 1965), 157, n. 3.

⁶²Sibt b. al-Jawzī, Mir'āt al-Zaman, B. M. Or. 4619, 169r. says that another individual besides Hilāl al-Ṣābī (dhakara ghairun min Ibn al-Ṣābī) mentioned the burning of Karkh in 362/972-973. His story agrees with that of Yahyā, PO, 149/357. The stories have been compared earlier in this chapter. In the Paris manuscript (#5866) of the Mir'āt al-Zaman, 87r, Sibt gives two accounts of Abū Taghlib's death at the beginning of A.H. 369. The first he attributes to "the writer" (al-musannif). This is apparently a reference to Hilāl al-Ṣābī, Sibt's principal source. See Cahen, "Note d'historiographie syrienne", 157, n. 3. Sibt then recounts a second story, which he characterizes as "sunder". This agrees with that repeated by Yahyā, PO, 195-196/303-304, as well as by most other writers.

⁶³Al-ʿUtbī, Kitāb al-Yamīnī in al-Manīnī, Sharḥ al-Yamīnī al-Musammā bi'l-fath al-wahbi ʿala ta'rīkh Abī Naṣr al-ʿUtbī, (Cairo, 1268/1852), II, 112.

⁶⁴H. Gottschalk, Die Mādārā'ijjūn; ein beitrage zur geschichte Agyptens unter dem Islām, (Berlin and Leipzig, 1931), 5.

⁶⁵Ibn Sa^cīd, Kitāb al-Mugrib fī Hulā al-Magrib, bk. IV, Geschichte der Ihšiden und Fustātenische Biographien, ed. K. L. Tallqvist, (Helsingfors, Acta Societatis Scientiarum Fennicae, 1899), XXV, and (Leiden, 1899).

⁶⁶Ibid., (Einleitung), 12.

⁶⁷Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^cāz al-Hunafā' bi Akhbār al-A'imma al-Fātimīyīn al-Khulafā', I, ed. Jamāl al-Din al-Shayyāl, (Cairo, 1967), 232. The new edition of the Itti^cāz, based on the Istanbul manuscript (Ahmad III, 3013), has been essential for the identification of Ibn Zūlāq and the authors discussed in chapter three as sources of Yahyā's "continuation". Without this significant new edition my conclusions would be necessarily far more modest. Gottschalk, Die Mādarā'ijjūn, 12, 13.

⁶⁸Abū al-Mahāsin b. Taghrībirdī, Al-Nujūm al-Zāhira fī Mulūk Miṣr wa'l Qāhira, (Cairo, 1929-1936), IV, 9.

⁶⁹Ibn Zāfir, Akhbār al-Duwal al-Munqati^ca, ed. A. Ferré, (Cairo, 1972), introduction, 13. See Gottschalk, Die Mādarā'ijjūn, 92-98, for further indications of Ibn Zāfir's dependent relationship to Ibn Zūlāq.

⁷⁰Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt al-A^cyān w'Anbā' Ibnā al-Zamān, (Beirut, 1968), II, 91-92.

⁷¹Ibn Sa^cīd, Kitāb al-Mugrib, IV, 46; Ibn Khallikān Wafayāt al-A^cyān, II, 91-92.

⁷²Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^cāz, I, 109.

⁷³Yahyā, PO, 122/820.

⁷⁴This date differs from that given by Canard, "Fātimids", EI², II, 853.

⁷⁵Yahyā, PO, 120-124/818-822; al-Maqrīzī, Itti^cāz, I, 106-110.

⁷⁶ al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 102, 232.

⁷⁷ The sources for the reign of al-Mu^Cizz, besides Yahyā and al-Maqrīzī's Itti^Cāz, include Ibn Khallikān's biography of al-Mu^Cizz, Wafayāt al-A^Cyān, V, 224-228; Ibn Zāfir, Akhbār al-Duwal al-Munqati^Ca, (Ferré), 21-30; Ibn al-Dawādārī, Kanz al-Durar wa Jāmi^C al-Ghurar, VI, ed. Salāh al-Dīn al-Munajjid, (Cairo, 1961); Ibn Taghrībirdī, al-Nujūm al-Zāhira, IV, 28-112; Ibn Sa^Cīd, Kitāb al-Mugrib, IV, and al-Kindī (d. 961), Kitāb Umarā' Misr, published under the title, The Governors and Judges of Egypt, ed. Rhuvon Guest, E.F.W. Gibb Memorial Series (Leiden, 1912) do not include the reign of al-Mu^Cizz.

⁷⁸ Ibn Khallikan, Wafayāt al-A^Cyān, V, 224-228; Ibn Zāfir (Ferré), 25, gives the date 5 Ramadān while Yahyā PO, 144/352, al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 134, and Ibn al-Dawādārī, VI, 147, give the date Tuesday 7 Ramadān. Actually in 362 Tuesday fell on 5 Ramadān: Wüstenfeld-Mahler'sche Vergleichungstabellen, comp. by H. F. Wüstenfeld and E. Mahler, ed. B. Spuler (Wiesbaden, 1961), 9.

⁷⁹ Yahyā gives the date 11 Rabī^C I, 365 for al-Mu^Cizz's death (PO, 162/370), but that the original text said 11 Rabī^C II is shown by the first lines of the section devoted to al-^CAzīz, "On Thursday, 10 Rabī^C II, 365, one day before his death, [al-Mu^Cizz] summoned his al-^CAzīz's brothers and uncles and the remaining members of his family and a group of the leaders of his state into his presence." PO, 163/371.

⁸⁰ Ibn al-Dawādārī, Kanz al-Durar, VI, 173. For Ibn Hammād and Ibn ^CIdhārī, see Ibn Zāfir, Akhbār (Ferré), 26, fn. 142.

⁸¹ al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 229.

⁸² Wüstenfeld-Mahler, Vergleichungstabellen, 9.

⁸³Yahyā, PO, 67/765; Ibn Zāfir, Akhbār al-Duwal al-Munqati^Cā, ed. F. Wüstenfeld, Die Stätthalter von Ägypten zur Zeit der Chalifen, Abhandlungen der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, XXI (Göttingen, 1876), part 4, chapter 4, 57.

⁸⁴Yahyā, PO, 83/781, al-Kindī, Umarā' Miṣr, 296, Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt al-A^Cyān, IV, 260-261; Ibn Taghribirdī, al-Nujūm al-Zāhira, IV, 9, 10. Ibn Khallikān gives both the seventh and the eighth.

⁸⁵Yahyā, PO, 100/798, al-Kindī, Umarā' Miṣr, 296, Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt al-A^Cyān, IV, 260-261. The Beirut edition, IV, 99, says also "The aforementioned ^CAlī died in A.H. 355, and, indeed, it is said he died 11 Muharram, 354." Ibn Taghribirdī, al-Nujūm al-Zāhira, IV, 9, 10.

⁸⁶Yahyā, PO, 113/811, Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt al-A^Cyān, IV, 105, Ibn Zāfir (Wüstenfeld), chapter 4, 59, and Ibn Taghribirdī, al-Nujūm al-Zāhira, IV, 9-10. Yahyā gives only the day and the month. The actual year probably has dropped out leaving only the words "of the (same) year" (min al-sana), giving the impression that he believes Kāfūr died in 356. Ibn Khallikān gives the date 10 Jumādā I, 356 and then the alternate years 355 and 357, stating that the latter is the suggestion of (Muhammad b. Salāma) al-Qudā^Cī (d. 454/1062) and (^CAlī b. Ahmad) al-Farghanī (d. 362/973).

CHAPTER 3

AL-SHIMSHĀTĪ; AL-MUSABBIHĪ

Although many chroniclers wrote about Syrian events taking place in the final third of the tenth century, A.D., much of the information they provide is repetitive in essentials and contradictory in detail. The chronicler who provides the most abundant information on Syria in the period 357-400/968-1010 is a Damascan historian, Ibn al-Qalānisī (d. 555/1160). Several other authors, including Abū Shujā^C al-Rūdhrāwarī, Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī, Ibn al-Athīr, Ibn Taghrībirdī, and the Syriac chronicler Bar Hebraeus,¹ relied on the same source as Ibn al-Qalānisī. That was the famous history, now lost, of Hilāl al-Ṣābī, the grandson of Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm al-Ṣābī. Hilāl al-Ṣābī's history, as mentioned earlier, was the standard version for the years 361-448/971-1055 conserved in the Reichschronographie. Of the authors utilizing Hilāl al-Ṣābī, Ibn al-Qalānisī preserves most fully the information on Syria contained in his chronicle.

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd is also a first-rate source for Syria and especially for the Hamdānid amirate of Aleppo. Although Yahya covers most of the standard events in this

period of Syrian history very briefly, it must be admitted, he often supplies facts missing from all the other chronicles. This is especially true for Byzantine-Hamdānid relations; Yahyā mentions a whole series of agreements only alluded to by other chroniclers. Marius Canard noted that Yahyā was well-informed on Syria and the Byzantine Empire and had used a variety of sources, which Canard, however, could not identify.²

By comparing what Yahyā writes on Syria to the statements of the other chronicles, the path leading back to the original chronicler of these Syrian events becomes clear. Once again in this comparison, it is the chroniclers of the twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth and even fifteenth centuries who preserve the contemporary reports relevant to this discussion of Yahyā's primary source for Syrian affairs. They include Ibn Zāfir, al-Maqrīzī, and Ibn al-Dawādārī. Ibn Zāfir (d. 1226) was an Egyptian historian who wrote the Akhbār al-Duwal al-Munqati'a, a compendium of dynastic histories, one of which is devoted to the Hamdānids. It is one of the key sources for establishing a chronology of events in North Syria. Al-Maqrīzī's Itti'āz al-Hunafā' is a history of the Fātimid dynasty, based on apparently reliable contemporary sources. It often touches on Syria. Ibn al-Dawādārī (d. 1335), another Egyptian chronicler of the Mamlūk period, reproduces long passages on the amirate of Aleppo

and the machinations of the Hāmdanid ghulām Bakjūr in the Fātimid volume of his great chronicle, the Kanz al-Durār wa jamī^C al-ghurar.³ Most interestingly, Ibn al-Dawādārī identifies a source. Under the entry for 394/1003-1004, he wrote, "This is the last which was in the handwriting of the shaykh Abū al-Qāsim ^CAlī b. Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā al-Sulamī al-Sumaysātī, may God bless him. I have copied from him for news of Syria."⁴

Ibn al-Nadīm wrote of this author in his tenth-century bibliographical work, the Fihrist:

Al-Sumaysātī is Abū al-Ḥasan ^CAlī b. Muḥammad al-^CAdawī, in origin from Sumaysāt of the country of the Armenians, in the thughūr [Byzantine border regions], and he used to teach Abū Taghlib b. Nāṣir al-Dawla and his brother, then he was their boon companion. He is a poet, anthologizer of traditions, and writer; he has a good memory and he transmits much, but he has a tendency to add his own embellishments to what he transmits. I knew him a long time ago, and it said that he has given up many of his (bad) qualities of character in his old age. He is still living in our time."⁵

Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, a thirteenth-century author, based his biography on Ibn al-Nadīm's, but Yāqūt emphatically states that the author-poet came from the town of Shimshāt, approximately sixty miles east of Kharput on the Arsanas river, which flows westward into the upper Euphrates.⁶ Shimshāt in Armenia and Samosata (Sumaysāt) in Syria, approximately 225 miles to the southwest, are frequently

confused.⁷ The Arabic orthography of the two names is identical, except for the location of the dots.

Ibn al-Dawādārī attributes the kunya (agnomen) Abū al-Qāsim to al-Shimshātī, as well as the nisba al-Sulamī, referring to the Arab tribe of Sulam, while Ibn al-Nadīm states his kunya as Abū al-Ḥasan and his tribal affiliation as ʿAdawī. Nevertheless, it seems inconceivable that the historian ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Shimshātī could have been any other than the poet of the same name, especially in view of the remoteness of the town of Shimshāt and the fact that both poet and historian would have lived at nearly the same time. The historian wrote about Syria in the Ḥamdānid period while the poet flourished at the Ḥamdānid courts of Mosul, Mayyāfāriqīn, and Aleppo. Besides having been active as late as 394/1003-1004, as Ibn al-Dawādārī's citation demonstrates, Ibn al-Azraq al-Farīqī (d. 1176) in the history of Mayyāfāriqīn which he composed states that one of his models was the history of Mosul by Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Shimshātī, which he dedicated to the ʿUqaylid ruler of Mosul Sharaf al-Dawla Qirwāsh b. al-Muqallad (391-442/1001-1050).⁸ Has Ibn al-Azraq merely confused the chronicler's name or could it be a question of his son? Ibn al-Azraq's is the only known reference to a Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Shimshātī.

A tiny fragment of al-Shimshātī's chronicle is preserved by al-Dhahabī (d. 1348) in his Ta'rikh al-Islām.⁹ The fragment is an account of Nicephoros II Phocas' conquest of the city of Aleppo in 352/962. Yahyā's description of the same event is similar in many aspects and is apparently related in some manner to al-Shimshātī's account.¹⁰ The following reproduction of these two passages shows that Yahyā has not taken all his information from al-Shimshātī, but that he gives an individual account with one direct quotation from al-Shimshātī while there are several verbal similarities. The underlining in the translated passages indicates these passages.

Al-Shimshātī, in Canard
(ed.), Sayf al-Dawla, Alger,
1934, 145-149:

Yahyā, 86-89/784-787:

(واقعة حلب من تاريخ علي بن محمد
الشمشاطي) قال في ذي القعدة اقلبت الروم
فخرجوا من الدروب فخرج سيف الدولة من حلب
فتقدم الى عزاز في اربعة الاف فارس وراجل.
ثم تيقن انه لا طاقة له بـلقا الروم لكثرتهم
فرر الى حلب و خيم بظاهرها ليكون المصاف
هناك. ثم جاءه الخبر بان الروم مالوا نحو
العق فجهز فتاه نجا في ثلاثة الاف لقصدتهم.
ثم لم يصبر سيف الدولة فسار بعد الظهر
بنفسه. و نادى في الرعية " من لحق بالامير فله
دينار." فلما سار فرسحا لقيه بعض العرب

و وافا نقفور الدميستق الى بلد حلب وكانت
موافاته كالكيسة لم يعلم سيف الدولة بخبره
الى ان قرب منه ولما علم بدتوه انفذ نجا
غلامه في جمهور عسكره للقاء واقام سيف
الدولة على حلب في بقية عسكره ولقى يانيس
بن الشمشقيق نجا في ناحية عزاز وحمل عليه
ابن الشمشقيق وضره بسيفه فانهزم نجا وعاد
الى معسكر سيف الدولة ليقاطع نقفور ويحصل
من ورائه و يكون سيف الدولة و من بقى معه
من عسكره و ٤٠٠٠ رجل حلب متمعين على المدينة
فاذا قرب عسكر نقفور اطبقت عليه واقام به

فأخبره أن الروم لم يبرحوا من جبرين وأنهم على أن يصبحوا حلب. فردّ إلى حلب ويزل على نهر القويق ثم تحول من الغد فنزل على باب اليهود وبذل خزائن السلاح للرعية. وأشرف العدو في ثلاثين ألف فارس فوقع القتال في أماكن شتى فلما كان العصر وافى ساقى العدو في أربعين ألف راجل بالرمح وفيهم ابن الشمشق وامتدّ الجيوش على النهر واحاطوا بسيف الدولة فحمل عليهم فلما ساراهم لوى رأس فرسه وقصد ناحية بالسر. وساق وراءه ابن الشمشق في عشرين الفا. فانكفأ أصحابه وانهمزت الرعية الذين كانوا على النهر عند ما انصرف سلطانهم واطلهم السيف وازدحموا في الابواب وتعلّق طائفة من السور بالحبال. فقتل منهم فوق ثلاثمائة وقتل من الكبار ابو طالب بن داود بن حمدان وابنه وداود بن علي واسر الكاتب سيف الدولة الفياض وابو نصر الى ابن حسين بن حمدان وكان عسكر الملاعين ثمانين ألف فارس والسوار فلا يحصى. ثم تقدم من الغد منتصر حاجب الدستق الى السور فقال "اخرجوا الينا شيخين نعتدون عليهما". فخرج شيخان الى الدستق فقرهما وقال: "اني احببت ان احقن دماءكم فتخيروا اما ان تستروا البلد او تخرجوا عنه باهلكم". وانما كان ذلك حيلة منه فاستأذناه في مشاورة الناس فلما كان من الغد اتى الحاجب فقال "لتخرج الينا عشرة منكم لنعرف ما عمل عليه اهل البلد. وكان رأى اهل البلد على الخروج بالامان فخرج العشرة وطلبوا الامان وتدخل الروم. فقال الدستق "صح ما بلغني عنكم". قالوا "ما هو". قال "بلغني انكم قد اقمتم مقاتليكم في الارقة مختفين فاذا خرج الحرم والصبيان

وسار نقفور الى حلب واشرف نجا على عسكره فهاهه وبعد عنه ووقف سيف الدولة خارج احد ابواب حلب وهو المعروف بباب اليهود واستنفر اهل المدينة فخرج اليه منهم زهاء مائة الف ووافت مواكب الروم وحمل يانيس بن الشمشق على سيف الدولة وحاربه ساعة وانهمز سيف الدولة وقصد طريق بالسر واتبعه ابن الشمشق ولم يزل في اثره الى ضبعة يقال لها سبعين وأنكا في عسكر سيف الدولة وقتل صاحب مطرده وجماعة من وجوه اصحابه وانهمز العامة وقتل الروم أليانا وازدحموا على باب اليهود ليدخلوا منه الى المدينة فمات في الضفطة خلق ونزل نقفور على مدينة حلب يوم السبت لاثني عشر ليلة بقيت من ذي القعدة سنة احد وخمسين وثلثمائة وكان سيف الدولة قد انشأ دارا في حلب برآها في الموضع المعروف بالحلبة وتباهى في عمارتها فأمر نقفور بخرابها وحاز ما فيها وخرج اليه يوم الاثنين شيخ المدينة باستدعاء منه لهم وجرى بينه وبينهم خطاب على ان يؤمنهم ويحملوا اليه مالا ويخلوا له المدينة ويدخل عسكره من باب ويخرج من باب آخر وينصرف عنهم فقال لهم نقفور اظنكم قد رتبتم مقاتليكم في الارقة وتصدونني تطلبوا مني الامان فاذا دخل اصحابي المدينة نفرتم عليهم وواقعتهم بهم فحلف له بعضهم انه ما بقي في المدينة احد يحمل سلاح فقال لهم انصرفوا اليوم واخرجوا التي في غد ليتقرر ما بيني وبينكم واعطيكم امانا فعادوا الى المدينة ولما كان في عشية ذلك اليوم راوا

ودخل اصحابي للنهب اغتالوهم". فقالوا "ليس في البلد من يقاتل". قال "احلفوا". فحلفوا له . وانما اراد ان يعرف صورة البلد فحينئذ تقدم بجيوشه الى قبالة السور و لجأ الناس الى القلعة ونصبت الروم سلاخ على باب أربعين وعند باب اليهود وصعدوا ولم يروا مقاتلة . فنزلوا البلد ووضعوا السيف وفتحوا الابواب وقضى الامر وعم القتل والسبي و الحريق طول النهار ومن الفد . وبقى السيف يعمل بها ستة ايام الى يوم الاحد لثلاث بقين من ذي القعدة فزحف الدمستق وابن شمشق على القلعة ودام القتال الى الظهر فقتل ابن الشمشق من عظمائهم و نحو مائة وخمسين من الروم وانصرف الدمستق الى مخيمه و نودي من كان معه اسير فليقتله . فقتلوا خلقا كثيرا . ثم عاد الى القلعة فاذا طلائع قد اقلت من نحو قنشرين و كانت نجدة لهم . فتوهم الدمستق انهم نجدة لسيف الدولة فترحل خائفا .

الروم سور المدينة قليل الحرس وركبوا سورها وفتحوها في السهر من نحو المدان ودخلوا السها و زحفوا الى القلعة و قاتلوها وكان فيها جماعة من الديلم فدفعوا الروم عنهم واقام نقفور بحلب بعد فتحه المدينة ثمانية ايام وسراياه تضرب في ظاهر المدينة وتسمى وتغنم ورحل عنها يوم الاربا سلاخ ذي القعدة وقد تزود وتزودوا اصحابه من الاموال وصنوف المتاع والسلاح والكراع ما لا يحصى ودخل الى القسطنطينية

Al-Shimshātī in Canard

(ed.), Sayf al-Dawla,
Algiers, 1934, 145-149:

(The battle of Aleppo from
the history of ^cAlī b.

Muhammad al-Shimshātī)

He said: In Dhū al-Qa^cda
the Byzantines approached
and came out of the passes, and
Sayf al-Dawla went out from

Aleppo, and advanced to ^cAzāz,
with four thousand horsemen and
footsoldiers. Then he was con-
vinced that he had not the means
to encounter the Byzantines on
account of their numerousness,

Yahyā, 86-89/784-787:

The Domestic Nicephoros arrived
in the territory of Aleppo, and
his arrival was like a surprise
attack. Sayf al-Dawla never
learned the news of it until
[Nicephoros] drew near, and
when [Sayf al-Dawla] learned of
his approach he sent his

ghulām Najā with the main body
of his army to meet him, and
Sayf al-Dawla remained at
Aleppo with the rest of the army.

Yanīs b. al-Shimishqīq en-
countered Najā in the region of

and he returned to Aleppo. He camped in its outskirts in order that his positions might be there. Then the news arrived that the Byzantines had turned toward the ^CAmq, and he dispatched his servitor

Najā with three thousand horsemen to proceed toward them. Then Sayf al-Dawla became impatient, and after noon he set out himself. He called out among the people, "A dinar for him who joins the amir!" When he had gone a parasang, one of the Arabs met him and told him that the Byzantines had not

departed from Jibrīn and that they were there in order to reach Aleppo in the morning. He returned to Aleppo and took up positions on the river Quwayq. The next day he moved and established himself at

Bāb al-Yahūd and opened storehouses of arms to the citizens. The enemy numbered almost 30,000 cavalrymen. The battle broke out in scattered locations, and when it was afternoon prayer, the rest of the enemy arrived, forty thousand foot-soldiers with pikes, among them

Ibn Shimishqīq. The armies were distended along the river, and the enemy encircled Sayf al-Dawla. He attacked them and when he had vied with them, he turned away his horse's head and headed for the region of Balis.

John Tzimiskes followed after him with 20,000 men. His followers retreated [or read: he attacked his troops*] and the citizens who were on the river fled when their sultan ran away and the sword dominated over them, and they were crowded together in the gates, and some

^CAzāz. Ibn al-Shimishqīq attacked him and struck him with his sword, and Najā fled, returning to Sayf al-Dawla's camp in order to cut Nicephoros' route and come up from behind him. Sayf al-Dawla and those who remained with him of his army and the populace of Aleppo stayed at the city, and when Nicephoros' army approached, they would surround and fall upon it.

Nicephoros marched toward Aleppo. Najā gazed upon his army. He was awed by it and fled. Sayf al-Dawla took up his position outside of one of Aleppo's gates known as the Bāb al-Yahūd and called out to the populace of the city to fight. About 100,000 of them came out to him. The Byzantine units arrived and Yanīs b.

al-Shimishqīq attacked Sayf al-Dawla and fought for a short time. Sayf al-Dawla fled and took the Bālis road.

Ibn al-Shimishqīq pursued him and remained at his heels as far as an estate called Sab^Cīn. Then he attacked Sayf al-Dawla's troops, and killed his spear-bearer and many of his noble companions. The common people fled, and the Byzantines slew thousands. They crowded toward the Bāb al-Yahūd to enter the city through it, and many died in the pressure of the crowd.

Nicephoros invested the city of Aleppo Saturday, 18 Dhū al-Qa^Cda, 351[Dec. 18, 962, a Thursday]. Sayf al-Dawla had

hung from the walls by ropes. More than three hundred of them were killed, and among the eminent were killed Abū Talib b. Dāūd b. Hamdān and his son and Dāūd b. ʿAlī and Sayf al-Dawla's secretary al-Fayyādī and Abū Nasrillāh** b. al-Husayn b. Hamdān, and it was the army of the accursed ones--80,000 cavalry and baggage which cannot be enumerated.

Then in the morning Muntasir the Domestic's chamberlain went forward to the wall and said, "Send out to us two shaykhs upon whom you will depend," and two shaykhs came out to the Domestic, and he approached them and said, "I would love to avoid the shedding of your blood. You will choose whether to protect your city or go out from it with your people." However, this was only a trick on his part. They asked his permission to consult the people, and when it was the next morning, the chamberlain came and called, "Send out to us ten of you that we may know what the people of the city intend." The opinion of the people favored going out under aman, and the ten went out and asked for aman and the Byzantines to enter. The Domestic said, "It is true what has reached me concerning you," and they said, "What's that?" "I heard that you stationed hidden warriors in the alleys, and when the women and children come out and my troops go in to plunder, they will murder them." They said, "There is no one to fight in the town." He said, "Swear!" and they swore to it. He only

constructed a palace outside Aleppo in a place called al-Halba; he took pride in its construction. Nicephoros ordered it destroyed, and he seized what was inside it. The shaykhs of the city came out to Nicephoros at his invitation on Monday, and a discussion took place between them and him, on the condition that he should

grant them aman and they should deliver money to him, and that the city should be vacated for him, and his army would enter it by one gate and exit by another and [then] he would leave them. "I think that you have placed your warriors in the alleys and you will strike me. You seek

aman from me, and when my troops enter the city, you will rush at them and fall upon them," and one of [the shaykhs] swore to him that there did not remain in the city one man bearing arms.

[Nicephoros] said to them, "Depart today and come out to me tomorrow to settle that between me and you, and I shall give you

aman. They returned to the city, and when it was evening of that day, the Byzantines saw few guards on the wall of the city. They climbed the wall and in the early morning opened [the gates]

from the area of the maydān and entered into it and advanced toward the citadel. They attacked it. Inside of it was a troop of Dailamites who repelled the Byzantines.

After the capture of the city, Nicephoros remained in Aleppo eight days, and his patrols roamed the outskirts of the city, taking prisoners and plundering, and departed from it Wednesday,

30 Dhū al-Qa^cda after he and his

wanted to know the condition of the city, and he ordered his troops opposite the wall, and the people took refuge in the citadel, and the Byzantines

soldiers furnished themselves with money, various articles, weapons, and pack animals beyond description, and he entered Constantinople.

erected ladders on the Bāb al-Arba^Cīn and at Bāb al-Yahūd, and they climbed up and saw no warriors. They dropped into the city, and put it to the sword, and opened the doors. The affair was finished, and the killing, taking of prisoners and fire stretched the length of the day and the next day, and the sword continued to do its work there six days until Sunday, 27 Dhū al-Qa^Cda. The Domestic and Ibn Shimishqīq marched on the citadel, and the battle lasted until noon, and Ibn Shimishqīq, among their great men, was killed, and about 150 Byzantines. The Domestic departed toward his camp, and it was declared whom-ever he held prisoner he killed, and they killed a great number. Then he returned to the citadel, and when scouts approached from the district of Qinnasrīn, it was reinforcements for them. The Domestic imagined they were reinforcements for Sayf al-Dawla, and he departed in fear.

* In the London M.S. of al-Dhahabī (B.M. Or. 48, 2v) this phrase reads *inkā fī ashābihi*, thus corresponding to Yahyā's statement, *thumma inkā fī ʿaskar Sayf al-Dawla* ("Then he attacked Sayf al-Dawla's troops.")

** The London M.S. reads *Abū Nasr b. al-Husayn*.

Al-Shimshātī and Yahyā differ on the facts of the Byzantine investment of Aleppo. Al-Shimshātī describes what seems to have been a pincer movement, while Yahyā pictures a straightforward attack by a massed army. Both authors say that Sayf al-Dawla chose to meet the Byzantines outside the Bāb al-Yahūd on the north side of the city. He was forced to arm the city population, and, once in battle with his popular force, he despaired and fled to Bālis, a city located on the Euphrates to the east, with John Tzimiskes in pursuit. The people minus their amir fled back into the gate or gates of the city where many perished in the crowding to pass through.

At Nicephoros' summons respected elders (shaykhs) from among the city's population went out to meet with him. Both authors say that Nicephoros sought to exchange amān for the population for the right to introduce his army into the city. Yahyā says that he sought only to march the army through the city and out again, but al-Shimshātī states, probably more truthfully, that the army's purpose in entering the town was to plunder. Either at that meeting, on Monday, according to Yahyā, or at another meeting the following morning, as al-Shimshātī says, Nicephoros accused the Aleppans of hiding attackers in the alleys of the city to assault his men when they entered the narrow streets of Aleppo. The shaykhs denied the charge and swore that there were no arms-bearing men in the city.

Both authors affirm that Nicephoros, once he was assured of the citizens' inability to resist attack, ordered his soldiers to scale the wall and seize the town. They were successful in this operation but failed to capture the citadel.

Although the stories of al-Shimshātī and Yahyā differ on many points, their description of the stratagem Nicephoros perpetrated to ascertain the city's defenselessness leaves no doubt as to the relation of the two sources. There is also a congruency in dating. Both authors thought the Wednesday on which the Byzantines withdrew from Aleppo was the thirtieth of Dhū al-Qa^Cda whereas in actuality it was the first day of Dhū al-Ḥijja, 351.¹¹

As al-Shimshātī was a contemporary and a resident of Sayf al-Dawla's court, probably he himself was the original author of this report. Yahyā did not reproduce the report verbatim. Either it was already abridged when it came to his attention, or he revised it to agree with information available to him in Antioch.

The sources for North Syrian events become especially laconic during the decade 356-367/967-977 and present some thorny contradictions. Canard summarized the situation:

We are very badly informed by our sources for this period of schism in the amirate of Aleppo...It is very difficult to know

exactly what Abū al-Ma^Cālī and Bakjūr did between 360 and 367 [970-978] and to fix the chronology of events, given the contradictory statements of the sources.¹²

Strangely, however, nearly all the sources agree on a certain limited set of facts. The lone exception is the thirteenth century historian of Aleppo, Ibn al-^CAdīm. He suffered the rare handicap of an overabundance of source material, resulting in an indiscriminate blending of sources, ending up in confusion. The following comparison of passages from Yahyā, Ibn al-Dawādārī, Ibn Zāfir, and Ibn al-Qalānisī for the career of Sayf al-Dawla's ghulam Bakjūr and events in the Hamdānid principality of Aleppo from Sayf al-Dawla's death (24 Šafar, 356/Feb. 8, 967) until Sa^Cd al-Dawla Abū al-Ma^Cālī b. Sayf al-Dawla's re-establishment in Aleppo (Rabī^C II, 367/Nov.-Dec., 977) demonstrates the considerable similarity of their accounts. Ibn al-Qalānisī among the authors who reproduce Hilāl al-Šābī's story provides the most representative version. In this light the comparison of Ibn al-Qalānisī to Ibn al-Dawādārī is significant since Ibn al-Dawādārī explicitly states that his source for Syrian matters was ^CAlī b. Muḥammad al-Shimshāṭī.

It is clear that Ibn al-Dawādārī, Ibn Zāfir, and Ibn al-Qalānisī all rely on a common source. Whether Yahyā depended on the same authority is more questionable. However, Ibn Zāfir verifies Yahyā's statement that Abū

(١١٧/٨١٥) فجأه (نقفور بك الروم) ابو المعالي
فخرج عن حلب الى السواستخلف فيها قرغوية
الحاجب...
(١١٩/٨١٧) وعصى قرغوية الحاجب على ابي
المعالي بحلب وعاد ابو المعالي الى ميفارقين...
(١٢٣/٨٢١) وسار ابو المعالي من ميفارقين
ونزل على باب حلب في شهر رمضان سنة ثمان
 وخمسين وثلثمائة واقام ثلاثة اشهر مقاتلا
لقرغوية الحاجب...
(١٢٥/٨٢٣) ولما عرف ابو المعالي فتح انطاكية
رحل عن حلب الى الحمص واقام بها وسار
الاضطرأويديرخ الى حلب فتحصن اهلها في
القلعة...
(١٢٩/٣٩٧، ١٣٠/٣٩٨) وأما ابو المعالي
بن سيف الدولة فان بكجور سار اليه من حلب
وهو يومئذ بحمص فخلع عليه وولاه حلب وعاد
بكجور الى حلب وأقامت له الدعوة فيها وفي سائر
اعمالها ووافق بكجور لسائر غلمان الدولة على
قبض على قرغوية الحاجب وقصد ابو المعالي
الى حلب وقلعته من حمص وقبض بكجور
على قرغوية وسار ابو المعالي الى حلب
وفتح المعرة وما يليها في شوال سنة ست
 وستين وثلثمائة ونزل الى حلب ومعه بنو الكلاب
 ووقع القتال بينه وبين بكجور واستظهر
ابو المعالي عليه ودخل حلب شهر ربيع الآخر
 سنة سبع وستين وثلثمائة واستقر الامر بينه
 وبين بكجور على ولاية حمص وسره المها.

وكان قرغوية قد تغلب على حلب بعد سيف
الدولة وأخرج ابن أستاذه منها في حديث
طويل. فسار ابنه ابو المعالي لما غلبه قرغويه فنزل
ما بين حماة و حصن برزويه بمسكوه. وكانت
حمص في ذلك الوقت قد أخرجها الروم ، فنزل
أرقطاش التركي غلام سيف الدولة من حصن
برزويه فلقى أبا المعالي مولاه ، أخرج له
أموالا عثر بها حمص ، ونزلها أبو المعالي ،
وعمرت حمص. وكانت الروم دخلوها في سنة
ثمان وخمسين وثلاث مئة وهي الدخلة الأولى ،
وزادت عمارة سنة في سنة ، وأبو المعالي يقوى
بها . وكان قرغويه قد استناب غلامه بكجور .
فلما قوى قبض على قرغويه وحبسه في قلعة
حلب. وملك حلب . وأقام بها نحو من خمس
أو ست سنين. وكتب أبو المعالي من حلب
وطمع في أخذ البلد من رجال من أعوان
قرغوية أن يكونوا معينين له على تسليم البلد
من بكجور . فجمع بنى كلاب ومن أمكنه وسار حتى
إذا صار على معرة النعمان فتحها ، وأخذ منها
غلاما يقال له توزين فقتله . وسار فنزل على
حلب. وذلك في سنة ست وستين وثلاث
مئة . فأقام بها نحو من أربعة أشهر .
ثم فتحها بالحيلة في حديث طويل . وتحصن
بكجور في القلعة ، ونزل عليها أبو المعالي ، ثم
توسطوا بينهما أن ينزل من القلعة بكجور
وبوليّه حمص . وتعاهدا على ذلك . فنزل بكجور
من القلعة ، وفوفى له بالعهد وولاه حمص في
هذه السنة المذكورة .

Ibn Zāfir, B.H. Or. 3685,
17r-18v:

ثم ان قرغويه قسد ما بينه وبين سعد الدولة
و وافقه اكثر الفلمان و اهل البلد فاخرج
ابا المعالي منها وتغلب عليها هو و غلام
بكجور و قطعاً دعوته و سار سعد الدولة
الى ارزن فيا فارتقن ...
و سار (سعد الدولة) الى حلب و نزل عليها
في رمضان سنة ثمان و خمسين و ثلثائة
و حاصرها ...
و لم يزل ابو المعالي على حصار حلب حتى
فتح الروم انطاكية في يوم النحر من ذى
الحجة سنة ثمان و خمسين ... فارتحل
ابو المعالي عنها الى خناصره ...
و في سنة تسع و خمسين وقع الملح بين ابى
المعالي و قرغويه و دعى له بحلب و كان
ابو المعالي ينزل حماة و رمنية و كانت حمص
في ذلك الوقت قد اخربها الروم حين
دخلوها في ذى الحجة سنة ثمان و خمسين
و ثلثائة فنزل رقطاش غلام سيف الدولة بها
وعمرها لمولاه ابى المعالي فنزلها بعد ذلك
و كان قرغويه قد قدم غلامه بكجور فقبض عليه
و اعتقله و ملك حلبا و اقام بها نحو خمس
سنين فلم يرض اهلها سيرته و كاتبوا ابو
المعالي فصار اليها و نزل معرة النعمن ففتحها
واخذ متغلبها من غلمانهم يقال له زهير
ثم نزل على حلب في سنة ست و خمسين
(ستين) و اقام عليها نحو من اربعة اشهر
ثم افتتحها بحيلة و تحصن بكجور بالقلعة
ثم صالح على ان يوليها ابو المعالي حمص
و سلم القلعة بما فيها و عظمت ملكة ابو
المعالي و قويت و وفى لبكجور .

Ibn al-Qalānisi, 27, 28:

و كان قرغويه قد غلب على امر حلب بعد وفاة
سيف الدولة و صنع ولده سعد الدولة ابا المعالي
منها و دفعه عنها فصار ابو المعالي الى حماة
ورمنية و كان ينزل مهبطاً في عسكره . و كانت
الروم قد خربت حمصاً و اعمالها و نزل رقتاش
التركي غلام سيف الدولة من حصن برزويه
فلقى مولاه ابا المعالي و سار معه و نزل على
حمص و شرع في عمارتها و لم شعشها لان الروم
لما ملكتها افسدت اعمالها في النوبة الاولى
عند خروجهم في سنة ٣٥٨ على غفلة من اهلها
و غرة من بها و اجتهد رقتاش في عمارتها
و تحصينها و ابو المعالي يقوى امره بها ويشد
شوكته فيها . و كان قرغويه قد استناب بكجور
في حلب فلما قوى امره قبض على مولاه و حبسه
في قلعة حلب و ملك البلد و اقام تقدير ست
سنين . و كوتب ابو المعالي من حلب و اطعم
في تلك البلد في رجال قرغويه و ان يكونوا
عوناً له على امره فجمع بنى كلاب و من امكنه
و نهض صوب حلب و نزل على معرة النعمان
فعلكها و اخذ منها غلاماً كان غلب عليها يقال
له زهير فقتله و سار عنها فنزل حلب سنة ٣٦٦
فاقام عليها تقدير اربعة اشهر ثم تسهل له
فتحها بحيلة عليها و تحصن بكجور في القلعة
فراسله ابو المعالي فطلب منه الامان فامنه فقال
بكجور " اريد يتوسط بينى وبينك وجوه البلد من
بنى كلاب . فاجابه الى ذلك فتوسطوا الامر
بينهما و اخذوا له العهد و الميثاق و الامان على
نفسه و ولده و ماله و انه لا بغدر به و يوليه
حمصاً على انه ينحدر من القلعة و يسلمها ولا
ياخذ منها شيئاً الا ما لا بد منه فاجابه الى
ذلك فولاه حمصاً لما نزل من القلعة و سلمها
و وفى له بكل ما عاهده عليه . و سار بكجور الى
حمص في السنة المذكورة

Yahyā, 117/815:

Abū al-Ma^Cālī feared [Nicephoros, the Byzantine Emperor] and went out from Aleppo to Balis, leaving Qarghuwayh the chamberlain as his deputy in it... (119/817) Qarghuwayh the chamberlain revolted in Aleppo against Abū al-Ma^Cālī, and Abū al-Ma^Cālī, returned to Mayyāfāriqīn...

(123/821) Abū al-Ma^Cālī set out from Mayyāfāriqīn and camped at the gate of Aleppo in Ramadān, 358, and he remained three months battling the chamberlain Qarghuwayh...

(125/823) When Abū al-Ma^Cālī learned of the conquest of Antioch, he withdrew from Aleppo to Hims, and he remained in it, and the stratopedarch came to Aleppo, and its population fortified themselves in the citadel...

(198/397) As for Abū al-Ma^Cālī

b. Sayf al-Dawla, Bakjūr went from Aleppo to him - he was at Hims then - and he conferred a khila^C upon [Bakjūr] and made

him wālī of Aleppo. Bakjūr returned to Aleppo, and the invocation was resumed in the name

of [Abū al-Ma^Cālī], and Bakjūr agreed with the rest of the

ghulams of the state on the seizure of Qarghuwayh the chamberlain. From Hims Abū

al-Ma^Cālī headed for Aleppo and its citadel, and Bakjūr seized

Qarghuwayh, and Abū al-Ma^Cālī departed for Aleppo, and captured

Ma^Carrat [al-Nu^Cmān] and what

Ibn al-Dawādārī, VI, 200,201:

Qarghuwayh had taken control of Aleppo after Sayf al-Dawla and expelled the son of his master from it in [what is] a long

story. And his son Abū al-

Ma^Cālī when Qarghuwayh defeated him camped between Hama and Hims Barzuwayh with his army.

At this time the Byzantines had laid waste Hims, and Arqtāsh the Turk, Sayf al-Dawla's

ghulam, came down from Hims

Barzuwayh and met Abū al-

Ma^Cālī, his master, and dispensed funds to him to rebuild

Hims, and Abū al-Ma^Cālī took up residence there and Hims was

rebuilt. The Byzantines had seized it in the year 358 (Nov. 25, 968-Nov. 13, 969), and that was the first seizure. The building advanced year by year,

and Abū al-Ma^Cālī became stronger in it. Qarghuwayh

made his ghulam Bakjūr [his] lieutenant, and when he became

stronger [Bakjūr] seized Qarghuwayh and imprisoned him in the citadel of Aleppo. He took possession of Aleppo and remained in possession of it about five or six years. Abū

al-Ma^Cālī was written to from Aleppo and was incited to seize the city by men among Qarghuwayh's supporters [and] they would be his helpers in the surrender of the town by Bakjūr. [Abū al-Ma^Cālī]

gathered the Banū Kilāb and

Ibn Zāfir, B.M. Or. 3685,
17r-18v:

Then Qarghuwayh undermined the relations between himself and Sa^cd al-Dawla [Abū al-Ma^cālī]. Most of the ghilmān and population of the city supported him, and he expelled Abū al-Ma^cālī from [Aleppo]. [Qarghuwayh]

and a ghulām Bakjūr seized it and terminated the invocation in [Abū al-Ma^cālī's] name and he set out for Arzan and Mayyafariqin...[Abū al-Ma^cālī] set out for Aleppo and invested it in Ramadān, 358 and besieged it...He continued the siege of Aleppo until the Byzantines captured Antioch on the day of Sacrifice [the tenth]

in Dhū al-Hijja, 358(Oct. 25, 969)...Abū al-Ma^cālī departed from it to Khunāsira. In the year 359 a peace settlement was concluded between Abū al-Ma^cālī and Qarghuwayh and [Abū al-Ma^cālī's] name was invoked [in the prayer] in Aleppo. Abū al-Ma^cālī had gone down to Hamā and Rafannayya. The Byzantines had ravaged Hims at that time when they attacked it in 358 A.H. Sayf al-Dawla's ghulām Ruqtāsh came down to it and rebuilt it for his master Abū al-Ma^cālī, and he inhabited it thereafter. Qarghuwayh promoted his ghulām Bakjūr and [Bakjūr] seized [Qarghuwayh],

Ibn al-Qalanisi, 27, 28:

Qarghuwayh had seized power in Aleppo after the death of Sayf al-Dawla and obstructed his son Sa^cd al-Dawla Abū al-Ma^cālī's access to [Aleppo] and driven him away from it, and Abū al-Ma^cālī went to Hamā and Rafanaiyya and had settled anxiously (? muhimman) in his camp. The Byzantines had ravaged Hims and its territories in the first attack at the time of their campaign in the year 358 when its population was unaware and inadvertent, and Ruqtāsh exerted himself to reconstruct and fortify [Hims], and Abū al-Ma^cālī consolidated his authority in it and his might increased in it. Qarghuwayh made Bakjūr his lieutenant in Aleppo, and when his power increased, he seized his master and imprisoned him in the citadel of Aleppo. He took possession of the city and remained about six years [in possession], and Abū al-Ma^cālī was written to from Aleppo and incited to seize the city by Qarghuwayh's men and they would help him in the plot. He gathered the Banū Kilāb and whomever he was able and went up in the direction of Aleppo. He attacked Ma^carrat al-Nu^cmān and seized it and captured in it the ghulām called Zuhayr who was in command there and killed him. He departed from

adjoined it in Shawwāl, 366 (May 23-June 20, 977), and he came to Aleppo, and with him were the Banū Kilāb. Battle broke out between him and Bakjūr, and Abū al-Ma^cālī won out over him and entered Aleppo in Rabi^c II, 367 [Nov. 16-Dec. 14, 977] and the affair was settled between him and Bakjūr on the basis of the wilāya (government) of Hims and [Abū al-Ma^cālī] dispatched [Bakjūr] to it.

whomever he was able until, when he came to Ma^carrat al-Nu^cmān, he seized it and he captured in it a ghulām called Tūzayn and killed him, and he went out and besieged Aleppo. And this was in the year 366, and he remained there about four months. Then he captured the city by a ruse in [what is] a long story. Bakjūr had fortified himself in the citadel, and Abū al-Ma^cālī besieged it, and then it was agreed between them that Bakjūr would descend from the citadel and [Abū al-Ma^cālī] would make him wālī at Hims. They pledged themselves to that and Bakjūr came down from the citadel, and [Abū al-Ma^cālī] fulfilled his pledge to him and installed him as wālī in this year.

imprisoned him and took possession of Aleppo, and he remained about five years [in possession]. Its people were not satisfied with his way of acting and they wrote Abū al-Ma^Cālī, and he departed for [Aleppo]. He attacked Ma^Carrat al-Nu^Cman and captured it and seized the commander of it, called Zuhayr from among their ghilmān. Then he besieged Aleppo in 366 and remained besieging it about four months, then he captured it by a ruse. Bakjūr had fortified himself in the citadel. Then he made peace on the condition that Abū al-Ma^Cālī would make him wālī of Hims, and he would surrender the citadel with everything that was in it. Abū al-Ma^Cālī's state became greater and stronger, and he fulfilled [his promises] to Bakjūr.

it and camped at Aleppo in 366, and he remained besieging it about four months, then he captured the city easily by a ruse, which he employed.

Bakjūr had fortified himself in the citadel. Abū al-Ma^Cālī contacted him, and he asked amān from him, and he granted it. Bakjūr said, "I want the nobles of the country from among the Banū Kilāb to mediate between myself and you." Abū al-Ma^Cālī consented to this, and they mediated the affair between them. They received for [Bakjūr] a pledge and a covenant and amān for himself and his son and his property. Abū al-Ma^Cālī would not doublecross him in it and would install him as wālī of Hims on the condition that he would descend from the citadel and that [Abū al-Ma^Cālī] would take possession of it and that he would not take anything from it except that which was absolutely necessary.

Abū al-Ma^Cālī consented to this and made him wālī of Hims, and when [Bakjūr] descended from the citadel, [Abū al-Ma^Cālī] took possession of it and fulfilled all that he had pledged to him. Bakjūr went to Hims in the year mentioned.

al-Ma^Cālī originally, on the revolt of Qarghuwayh, went to Mayyāfāriqīn and returned from there in Ramādān, 358/July 19-Aug. 17, 969 to besiege Aleppo. He remained besieging Aleppo until the Byzantines captured Antioch in Dhū al-Ḥijja, 358. Yahyā says the thirteenth, Ibn Zāfir the tenth.

At this point Yahyā's version of events becomes blurred. He next mentions Abū al-Ma^Cālī at Ḥimṣ, receiving a visit from Bakjūr, without giving any date for the visit.

Ibn Zāfir, Ibn al-Qalānisī, and Ibn al-Dawādārī all say that after leaving Aleppo Abū al-Ma^Cālī wandered south into the Ḥimṣ-Rafaniyya area, where his father's former ghulām Ruqtāsh was commander of the fortress of Ḥiṣn Barzuwayh. Ruqtāsh rebuilt Ḥimṣ, which had been destroyed during Nicephoros Phocas' last campaign in Syria. Yahyā does not mention Ruqtāsh at this juncture, but he refers to him at two other points in his chronicle, including the passing of Ḥiṣn Barzuwayh into Byzantine hands in 975.¹³ Ibn Zāfir, Ibn al-Qalānisī, and Ibn al-Dawādārī place the sack of Ḥimṣ in Dhū al-Ḥijja, 358/Oct. 16-Nov. 13, 969, although Yahyā's long account of Nicephoros' campaign makes clear that the attack took place between 23 Dhū al-Qa^Cda and 10 Dhū al-Ḥijja, 357/Oct. 19-Nov. 5, 968.¹⁴

Ibn Zāfir says that in 359/Nov. 14, 969-Nov. 4, 970, a peace settlement was negotiated between Qarghuwayh and Abū al-Ma^Cālī, according to which the khutba was again given in the name of Abū al-Ma^Cālī in the pulpits of Aleppo. Al-Magrīzī confirms this agreement, which he has put under the following year, 360 A.H.; his notice is only a brief one which he may have inserted in incorrect sequence.¹⁵

Bakjūr's visit to Abū al-Ma^Cālī in Hims could either have taken place at the time of the conclusion of this agreement, when he would have been Qarghuwayh's natural choice as an envoy, being his most trusted and honored subordinate, or during the next two or three years, when Bakjūr, finding support among the other ghilmān, seized Qarghuwayh and imprisoned him in the citadel of the city. Ibn Zāfir, Ibn al-Qalānisī, Ibn al-Dawādārī all maintain that Bakjūr was in power at Aleppo for five or six years. Since Abū al-Ma^Cālī invested Aleppo in 366/Aug. 30, 966-Aug. 18, 967, and besieged it four months, before entering the city Rabi^C II, 367/Nov. 16-Dec. 14, 977, Bakjūr must have replaced Qarghuwayh in power in 361 or 362/971-973.

The meeting between Bakjūr and Abū al-Ma^Cālī must have established some sort of modus vivendi between the territories of Aleppo and Hims, similar to what Qarghuwayh and Abū al-Ma^Cālī had agreed upon.

Yahyā's text, as it stands, makes no sense. Bakjūr was in no position to institute the khutba in Abū al-Ma^Cālī's name unless he was either the delegated deputy of the ruler or himself in power. The fact that Abū al-Ma^Cālī entrusted Bakjūr with the government of Aleppo argues that the second possibility must be the correct one, that Bakjūr visited Abū al-Ma^Cālī after overthrowing Qarghuwayh.

The corrupt nature of the text at this point is shown by Yahyā's mentioning twice that Abū al-Ma^Cālī set out from Hims to Aleppo, interjecting that Bakjūr had seized Qarghuwayh. Yahyā mentions Qarghuwayh's arrest as if it were an afterthought, as if he had forgotten to place the arrest in its correct chronological position. The unanimity on the part of the other three chroniclers that Bakjūr was in power five or six years makes clear that this statement was in fact an afterthought.

Yahyā agrees with Ibn ḏāfir, Ibn al-Qalānisi, and Ibn al-Dawādārī that Abū al-Ma^Cālī first captured Ma^Carrat al-Nu^Cmān and that the Banū Kilāb were his allies in this campaign. Yahyā says Ma^Carrat al-Nu^Cmān fell in Shawwāl, 366/May 23-June 20, 977. Shawwāl is the tenth month of the Muslim year.

On the dating of the siege of Aleppo, Yahyā says Aleppo fell in Rabī^C II, 367, the fourth month of the Muslim year. As the other sources say that the siege

lasted four months, the siege of Aleppo must have begun in the last month of 366. Thus, the sources are agreed on the chronology.

Bakjūr remained in the citadel and only agreed to descend after Abū al-Ma^Cālī had guaranteed him amān for himself, his son and his property and promised to entrust him with the government of Hims. Representatives of the Banū Kilāb negotiated the agreement. When Bakjūr descended, Abū al-Ma^Cālī kept his word. Yahyā's statement, "The matter was settled between Abū al-Ma^Cālī and Bakjūr on the basis of the government of Hims, and [Abū al-Ma^Cālī] dispatched [Bakjūr] to it," is an echo of the negotiations to which Ibn Zāfir and Ibn al-Dawādārī allude and which Ibn al-Qalānisī explicitly mentions.

Although drawing on the same source as Ibn Zāfir, Ibn al-Qalānisī, and Ibn al-Dawādārī, Yahyā has abridged the source to such a degree and jumbled the course of events so completely that the result is a totally contradictory impression of what actually happened. Perhaps, he received his knowledge of these events in an abridged version of the original report, as was conjectured earlier.

The extensive congruencies displayed in the accounts of the many authors writing on Syrian events in the final third of the tenth century are briefly outlined in the appendix to this chapter. Numbers four, five, six and eight, referring to several sets of events in the

years 370-373/980-984 and 378-381/988-992, are especially significant comparisons. They demonstrate that Ibn al-Dawādārī, al-Maqrīzī (in the Itti^Cāz), and Ibn al-Qalānisī present a story agreeing for the most part in factual content and displaying many verbal similarities in the manner of the excerpts just cited.

Another significant coincidence between these chroniclers is that all three incorrectly date ^CAdud al-Dawla's death to 370 A.H. Ibn al-Qalānisī's date is deficient only in the year. Al-Maqrīzī says Shawwāl, 370, and Ibn al-Dawādārī 370. ^CAdud al-Dawla actually died 8 Shawwāl, 372/March 6, 983.¹⁶ Evidently, all three authors shared a common source for this false information.

The unity the sources display in describing earlier events breaks down revealingly for developments in the amirate of Aleppo, 382-385/992-995. In this period the Fāṭimids made a prolonged attempt to seize Aleppo. The Amir Sa^Cd al-Dawla Abū al-Ma^Cālī had no sooner issued an audacious proclamation of hostility to the Fāṭimids and declared his intention to invade Egypt than he died, 26 Ramadān, 381/Dec. 6, 991. A week earlier the Fāṭimid governor of Tripoli had defeated the rebellious governor of Damascus Munīr al-Saqlabī at Marj al-^CAdhrā in the Ghūṭa valley east of Damascus,¹⁷ and Manjūtakīn, the new Egyptian commander and governor, had arrived with his army in Damascus before Sa^Cd al-Dawla's death. Thus,

the Fāṭimids were well-placed to take advantage of the situation to threaten Abū al-Fadā'il, Abū al-Ma^cālī's son and successor, and his chief minister Lu^clu^c al-Jarrāhī, the actual ruler of the city. In early 382/March 9, 992-Feb. 25, 993, Manjūtakīn set out from Damascus to lay siege to Aleppo. The city was under siege for much of the next three years.

Unfortunately, Ibn al-Dawādārī gives only a very brief report on these events under the headings 384/994 and 385/995. Yahyā's story agrees with Ibn al-Dawādārī to some extent but also has unique information, probably derived from Byzantine sources. Ibn Zāfir and al-Maqrīzī's accounts combine the traditions of Ibn al-Dawādārī and Ibn al-Qalānisī; it should be repeated that Ibn al-Qalānisī's report is a reproduction, with some editing, of Hilāl al-Ṣābī's. Once again the local Aleppo chronicler Ibn al-^cAdīm is badly confused by the variety of contradictory sources at his disposal.

Rozen and Canard both studied these contradictory versions to some extent, and Canard produced a solid reconstruction of events surrounding the siege of Aleppo.¹⁸ Canard found that of the sources, "None constitutes a complete version or is exempt from confusions, and it is difficult to synthesize them given their sometimes considerable divergencies."¹⁹

All sources are agreed upon a minimum of common factors: that the siege of Aleppo was interrupted by two Byzantine interventions, one by the governor of Antioch and a second by the Emperor himself, which brought the siege to an end. The Fāṭimids had built fortifications, baths, markets, hostelries (khāns), and so forth, and the siege had taken on a permanent character.

Yahyā, however, says nothing of the motive role which Ibn al-Qalānīsī attributes to al-Husayn b. al-Maghribī in the campaign of 992. Originally a secretary for Abū al-Ma^Cālī, he had deserted him to serve Bakjūr at al-Raqqa. Ibn al-Maghribī incited his new master against Abū al-Ma^Cālī, who, however, defeated him in April, 991. Ibn al-Maghribī then fled to Egypt via al-Kūfa in Iraq. Arriving in Egypt Jumādā I, 381/July 16-Aug. 14, 991, he soon convinced al-^CAziz of Aleppo's importance and vulnerability.²⁰ Ibn al-Maghribī accompanied Manjūtakīn's army to administer both military and financial affairs. The sources based on Hilāl al-Ṣābī, including Ibn al-Qalānīsī, say that Manjūtakīn raised the siege of Aleppo in autumn, 992, after Lu^Clu^C had bribed Ibn al-Maghribī, but both al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Zāfir reject this tradition. It would be strange if Ibn al-Maghribī were to sabotage an undertaking which he had done so much to bring about.

Ibn al-Qalānīsī places the intervention of Michael Burtzes, the Antiochan governor, in 382/992; Yahyā says

it took place two years later, in 384/994. Both chroniclers agree that Manjūtakīn invaded Byzantine territory in the former year. According to Ibn al-Qalānisī, Burtzes was marching by way of the direct east-west route between Aleppo and Antioch which crossed the Orontes at the Iron Bridge (Jisr al-Hadīd). Manjūtakīn then purportedly raised the siege of Aleppo and went out and camped below the citadel of ^CAzāz (Ḥiṣn al-^CAzāz). Ibn al-Qalānisī or, more precisely, his authority Hilāl al-Ṣābī, is in total confusion here for he specifically states that the battle took place on the Orontes. Yet, ^CAzāz is approximately seventy-five miles distant from the Iron Bridge, up the Afrin river valley. In the battle at Jisr al-Hadīd, the Orontes separated the hostile forces until, according to Hilāl al-Ṣābī (quoted here according to Ibn Taghrībirdī):

An old man of many years, a Dailamite, came forth from [Manjūtakīn's] army with a shield and three spears in his hand, and stood on the bank of the river opposite a troop of Byzantines. They fired arrows at him, and he swam until he crossed the river and arrived at the land on that side. The water in the river was up to his chest. When Manjūtakīn's army saw him, infantry and cavalry threw themselves into the water. Manjūtakīn restrained them, but they did not stop until they were together with the Byzantines, and God sent his aid down upon the Muslims.²¹

Yahyā says that Manjūtakīn raised the siege of Aleppo to attack and sack the fortress of ^CImm, Burtzes' estate,

after Burtzes had thrown Manjūtakīn's envoy into prison.²² The envoy had instructed Burtzes not to put into effect the alliance which made Aleppo a Byzantine protectorate. Manjūtakīn then went on to Antioch where he remained only one-half day, finding that Burtzes was unwilling to fight a battle. Basil II subsequently ordered the envoy sent to him after which he released him. This information must have come from a Byzantine source.

The sources make such indefinite chronological statements that one cannot say with certainty whether Manjūtakīn resumed the siege of Aleppo in 383/993.

Yahyā places the first Aleppan request to Basil II for aid in 384/994. Basil then ordered Burtzes to mobilize his troops and bring aid to the Aleppans. When the Byzantine troops approached, Manjūtakīn came to meet the Byzantines in a battle which received the name "the Battle of the Ford" on 6 Sha^cbān/Sept. 15, 994. A comparison of Yahyā, Ibn al-Dawādārī, and Ibn Zāfir's accounts of the battle and the events of the year demonstrates the relationship of the three chronicles. Al-Maqrīzī also gives a brief version of the same account.²³ Ibn al-Qalānisi gives no information for 384/994 because he has mistakenly conflated the events of 384 with those of 382.²⁴

All the Arabic sources, including Ibn al-Qalānisi, mention Michael Burtzes, Byzantine commander of Antioch, as al-Burjī. This degree of awareness is unusual; Arabic

لما دخلت سنة أربع سار (بنجوتكين) بمعسكره وقد جمع واستعند ونزل على حلب وضايقه شهرين فبعث لولوه الى البرجي صاحب انطاكية يسامره بالمسير اليه فجمع الروم وكان قد حصر اليه من بلاد السروم رئيس عظيم يقال له اصابع الذهب فجمع الاخير معه من الكهنة وسارا بمن معهم حتى نزلا على نهسر المنطوب بافاصبة فرجع بنجوتكين عن حلب ونزل بازاسهم وكسان عسكره اكثر من عسكره فاشار البرجي بان لا يقاطعهم الروم باي اصابع الذهب ذلك فقاطعهم على شاطئ النهر وقا تل رجل ديلبي على الشاطئ ثم خاضه فقس النهر فالبسا عسكر الفرخ والناس ينظرون اليه والسهام تنقع فيه وهو لا يبرعوى فلما وصل الي شاطئهم وثقت رجله قاتل السي ان ملك موثما وحسن راي عسكر بنجوتكين من مسا دمل السديلسي تراسوا باحاصمهم السي الما فانهزمت الروم وقتل منهم نحو من خمسة الاف رجل ورجع البرجي الى انطاكية وعاد بنجوتكين السي محاصرة حلب وكانت هذه الواقعة في سنة مئتين سنة اربع مئتين وتسعين

والعرب ونهبت سوادهم فلما ناعد الروم ذلك

فيها (٢٨٤ هـ) كان العمار على حلب ، والحمدانيين بها من قبل أبو المالحى بعد وفاته ، وبنجوتكين الحاصر لها . فحاصرها نحو من شهرين في هذه السنة . فتجمعت الروم بأنطاكية مع واليها البرجي يريدون النجدة لحلب ، لما كان بينهم من المهادنة والشروط . وكان قد خرج اليهم من داخل الروم رئيس لهم في جمع كثير يقال له اصابع الذهب ، فساروا بجمعهم حتى نزلوا على الروح نحو فامية على النهر العقوب . فسار بنجوتكين اليهم ، ونزل مقابلهم ، وكان عسكره اكثر من عسكر الروم . فلما نظرت الروم اليهم قال البرجي لاصابع الذهب " انصوب ان لا تبرز اليهم لانهم اكثر منا . " وقد كانت الروم في التديم يخرجون لكل رجل من المسلمين عشرة منهم في الحرب . فخالفه اصابع الذهب لجهله بذلك . فكانت الكسرة على الروم ، وكبسوا منهم أموالا عظيمة . وقتل منهم نحو من خمسة آلاف رجل ، وانهزم البرجي الى أنطاكية ، وعاد بنجوتكين الى حصار حلب .

انهزموا ايضا وتخلّوا عن البرجي والمسيحيين
 فاضطّروا الى الهزيمة وقتل من عسكر الروم زهاء خمسة
 آلاف وذلك يوم الجمعة لست ليالى حلت من
 شعبان سنة أربع وثمانين وتلقائا وعاد البرجي
 والمسيحيون الى أنطاكية وسميت هذه الوقعة
 وقعة الخافضة وعاد بنجوتيين الى منازل حلب
 ومحاصرتها.

Yahyā, 232-233/440-441:

[Manjūtakīn] resumed the siege of Aleppo. The Aleppans contacted the Emperor Basil, asking him for aid and to help

them repel Manjūtakīn. He ordered the magister Michael Burtzes, governor of Antioch, to help them and to drive

Manjūtakīn away from Aleppo. Burtzes gathered troops and the Emperor sent him the magister Leo Melissenos with another army as reinforcement for him. Burtzes organized a detachment to raid the territories of Aleppo, taking prisoners and captives. Those who carried provisions and

forage to Manjūtakīn's army fled in fear of them, and he harassed them. Burtzes and Melissenos took up positions

in al-Ārwāj, and the army of the Hamdānids was added to theirs.

Manjūtakīn withdrew from Aleppo and set out to meet them in battle. He took up positions on the bank of the river opposite the army of

Ibn Zāfir, Rosen, Basil, 240,

241, B.M. Or. 3685, 23r-23w:

When the year 384 began, [Manjūtakīn] went with his army, which had been gathered and prepared, and invested Aleppo and besieged

it two months. Lūlū sent to Burtzes, governor of Antioch, with the order to come to him, and he gathered the Byzantines, and a great general, called Goldfingers, came to him from the lands of the Byzantines, and the other [Goldfingers] had gathered together with him whomever he was able, and they went with those they had until they took positions on the river Orontes at Apamea. Manjūtakīn withdrew from Aleppo and took positions opposite the army [of Burtzes], and Burtzes advised that the Byzantines should not fight them. Goldfingers scorned him, and they fought them on the bank of the river. A Dailamite infantryman was fighting on the bank of the river, then he dived into the river towards the Franks [i.e., Byzantines]. The people watched him, and the arrows fell on him. When he reached their bank and his feet were secure, he

Ibn al-Dawadārī, VI, 234-235:

In [384 A.H.] Aleppo was under siege. Within the city were the Hamdānids under the suzerainty of Abū al-Ma^cālī after the death [of Sayf al-Dawla], and

Manjūtakīn was besieging it. He besieged it about two months in this year. The Byzantines had assembled in Antioch with their governor Burtzes since there were peace and obligations between them. A commander called Goldfingers had gone out to them from the interior of Byzantium among a great army. They had gone with their troops until they took positions at

al-Rūj near Apamea on the river Orontes. Manjūtakīn went to them and took positions opposite them. His army was greater than that of the Byzantines. When the Byzantines observed them, Burtzes said to Goldfingers, "It is incorrect for us to go forth to them because they are more numerous than we are. Formerly the Byzantines would send out ten

the Byzantines and the Hamdānids, and the river ran between them. When Burtzes saw Manjūtakīn's army and its number, Burtzes thought that battle would be unsuitable for him and those with him. The Aleppans enjoined him to meet [Manjūtakīn] and pictured the ease of the affair. The Byzantines occupied one ford, the Aleppans the other ford, and they prepared to cross to [Manjūtakīn]. Manjūtakīn sent the bedouin who were with him with a unit from his army to meet the Aleppans; he and the rest of his army drew themselves up to oppose the Byzantines. When the bedouin were close to the Aleppans, they fled from the ford. The bedouin pursued them and plundered their baggage. When the Byzantines saw this, they also fled and abandoned Burtzes and Melissenos, and he was forced to flee. About 5,000 men were killed of the Byzantine army, and that was Friday, 6 Sha^cbān, 384. Burtzes and Melissenos returned

fought until he was master of the place. When the army of Manjūtakīn saw what the Dailamite had done, they all threw themselves into the water. The Byzantines fled, and of them about 5,000 men were killed. Burtzes returned to Antioch, and Manjūtakīn returned to the siege of Aleppo, and this battle was in Sha^cbān, 384.

men in war for every one of the Muslims." Goldfingers opposed him in this because of his ignorance. The Byzantines were defeated, and [the Muslims] seized from them vast riches, and of [the Byzantines] about 5,000 men were killed. Burtzes fled to Antioch, and Manjūtakīn returned to the siege of Aleppo.

to Antioch. This battle was
called the Battle of the Ford.

Manjūtakīn returned to the
investment and siege of Alepp.

authors confuse even such prominent Byzantines as the Emperor and the Domestic. This appears to indicate the existence of a single well-informed source.

A top Byzantine officer from the central lands of Byzantium aided Burtzes in this campaign. Yahyā calls him by his Greek name, Leo Melissenos, Ibn Zāfir and Ibn al-Dawādārī "Fingers of Gold" or "Goldfingers" (Aṣābi^C al-Dhahab).

Yahyā says the battle took place at al-Arwāj, Ibn Zāfir at Apamea, and Ibn al-Dawādārī at al-Rūj near Apamea. Al-Arwāj must be the Arabic plural of al-Rūj, a valley located between Aleppo and Ma^Carrat al-Nu^Cmān.²⁵ Thus, all three chroniclers could have drawn their information for the location of the battle from one source.

Their stories of the battle itself have some characteristics in common. All three authors say that Burtzes, realizing that numbers favored Manjūtakīn, counselled against fighting. According to Ibn Zāfir and Ibn al-Dawādārī, Leo Melissenos rejected this wise advice, but Yahyā maintains that it was the Aleppan contingent, not Leo Melissenos, which enjoined Burtzes to fight with the claim that victory would be easy to grasp. In contrast to Ibn Zāfir, who attributed Manjūtakīn's victory to the one Dailamite soldier who swam across the Orontes, setting an example for Manjūtakīn's army (the same story Hilāl al-Ṣābī relates concerning the battle at Jisr al-Ḥadīd),

Yahyā says that the Aleppans fled from the ford which they were assigned to guard when Manjūtakīn's bedouin approached. This version presumably represents a Byzantine or local Antiochan version of events. It has the advantage of shifting blame from the Byzantines, upon whom a loyal Hamdānid subject might wish to put it, onto their Aleppan allies. The Byzantines lost "about 5,000 men," according to Yahyā, Ibn Zāfir, and Ibn al-Dawādārī's unanimous testimony.²⁶

For the events of 385 there is a similar correspondence between the sources. The siege of Aleppo went on from Sha^cbān, 384 until Rabī^c I, 395/April 5-May 4, 995.²⁷

Yahyā and Ibn Zāfir as well as Ibn al-Qalānisī say that Basil was occupied in Bulgaria and that the Aleppans sent thither to obtain aid. Ibn Zāfir, Ibn al-Dawādārī, and al-Maqrīzī claim that Basil crossed Anatolia, from Constantinople to ^cAzāz in only seventeen days. The same distance normally took caravans two months. According to Ibn Zāfir and al-Maqrīzī, the Emperor travelled so quickly that he arrived with only 17,000 of the 40,000 troops with which he had set out. Ibn al-Qalānisī says that he arrived with 3,000 men after sixteen days. Yahyā does not tell the duration of Basil's journey, only that he arrived unexpectedly in Rabī^c I at Marj Dābiq near ^cAzāz, which is the same month that Ibn Zāfir and al-Maqrīzī say the siege ended. Ibn al-Qalānisī says that

the expedition took place in the spring (rabī^Can). Manjūtākīn began his precipitate retreat on 30 Rabī^C I or 1 Rabī^C II, 385/May 4 or 5, 995.²⁸ All the chroniclers agree that Manjūtākīn retreated upon receiving the news of Basil's arrival, having burnt the buildings he had built during the winter and all the stores which could not be carried.

Yahyā, Ibn Zāfir, Ibn al-Qalānisī, and Ibn al-^CAdīm say that either Abū al-Fadā'il, Lu^Clu^C, or both together met Basil outside Aleppo and thanked him. Yahyā recalled that Abū al-Fadā'il and Lu^Clu^C prostrated themselves before Basil, who sent them back to the city with the money he had exacted in tribute during the past years as a gift. Rozen commented that in this scene, as Yahyā describes it, "The gratitude of one saved from the prolonged siege of the Hamdānids is heard very clearly, and the source of this information must be some contemporary and a chronicler closer to the Hamdānids."²⁹

Al-Shimshātī was both a contemporary and close to the Hamdānids. He not only had been the boon companion of Abū Taghlib, but Ibn al-Azraq says that he was also among the incomparable circle of poets which Sayf al-Dawla assembled.³⁰ Presumably it was late in Sayf al-Dawla's life when al-Shimshātī together with al-Fayyādī, a favored secretary of Sayf al-Dawla, gathered ten thousand poetic panegyrics of the Amir into one collection.³¹ Certainly

al-Shimshātī had easy access to the Hamdānid courts of Mosul, Mayyāfāriqīn, and Aleppo. Since he must have been somewhat senior to his pupil Abū Taghlib, who was born in 328/Oct. 18, 939-Oct. 5, 940, his death date probably fell soon after 394/Oct. 30, 1003-Oct. 17, 1004, the year, Ibn al-Dawādārī states, al-Shimshātī's manuscript left off.³²

If al-Shimshātī was the single, original source of all the reports on events in Syria and Damascus from the death of Sayf al-Dawla in 967 through 1004, a corollary is that Hilāl al-Ṣābī must have used al-Shimshātī's chronicle. Professor C. Cahen, in an article devoted to the first part (up to 448/1055) of Ibn al-Qalānisī's Dhayl Ta'riḫ Dimashq, pointed out that Ibn al-Qalānisī made only restricted use of Hilāl al-Ṣābī's chronicle.³³ The passages that could be assigned to Hilāl al-Ṣābī all preceded 400/1009-1010, and Ibn al-Qalānisī reproduced almost nothing of Hilāl's material on Baghdad. Cahen proposed as an explanation that Hilāl al-Ṣābī may have added material drawn from a Syrian-Egyptian literary source for the passages concerning 364-368/974-979, 371-379/981-990, and 380-389/990-999 to his otherwise complete chronicle.³⁴

Al-Maqrīzī introduces a long passage on the relations of Alptakīn, the independent ruler of Damascus, with al-^CAzīz, 364-368/974-979, with the words, "As for news of Syria."³⁵ Similarly, Ibn al-Dawādārī begins a passage

on Bakjūr with the phrase, "Return to the narrative of Bakjūr."³⁶ These verbal traces indicate that al-Shimshātī's composition was a chronicle, specifically devoted to Syrian events, including Syria's relations with Egypt, emphasizing the treatment of personalities or perhaps even being a collection of biographies; it was not organized on a strictly annalistic basis. Every chronicler who reproduces al-Shimshātī's information tends to treat it in a supra-annalistic manner, subdividing his accounts to some degree, but never fully integrating al-Shimshātī's narrative into the annalistic structure.

Stylistically, Cahen also found evidence that Hilāl al-Ṣābī's material on Syrian events may have derived from a Syrian-Egyptian source, "The historical literature of Fatimid Egypt was characterized by the relatively large place that biographies, composed without any annalistic arrangement, of princes and vizirs, occupied."³⁷

Together with the extensive similarities between the texts of Ibn al-Qalānisi, Ibn al-Dawādārī, and al-Maqrīzī, 357-384/967-995, all three chronicles incorrectly date ʿAdud al-Dawla's death to 370. Furthermore, a short notice entitled "narrative of Damascus," which Ibn al-Dawādārī gave on the explicit authority of al-Shimshātī, summarizes the succession of governors of Damascus, 385-394/995-1004 exactly as Ibn al-Qalānisi arranges their succession in his more detailed account.³⁸ Ibn al-Dawādārī

neglects only two governors, whose periods of tenure were very brief. In conclusion, there can be little doubt that al-Shimshātī was the author of the chronicle *Hilāl al-Ṣābī* utilized for his passages on Syrian-Egyptian affairs prior to 400 A.H.

Yahyā also made use of al-Shimshātī as a source as the comparison of Yahyā's account of the siege of Aleppo in 962 with that of al-Shimshātī, as preserved by al-Dhahabī, shows. Whether Yahyā had the actual text of al-Shimshātī before him or some sort of an abridgement or redrafting is difficult to say. Comparison of Yahyā's text with Ibn al-Dawādārī and with the parallel accounts of other authors reveals that al-Shimshātī was the original source of information on the Hamdanid amirate of Aleppo after Sayf al-Dawla's death for both Yahyā and the other chroniclers.

Al-Musabbiḥī

The most prominent contemporary Egyptian historian of the reign of the caliph al-Ḥākim and the source most frequently cited by historians in subsequent centuries was a Fāṭimid government official, Muḥammad b. Abī al-Qāsim ʿUbaydallāh al-Musabbiḥī (366-420/977-1029). Al-Musabbiḥī directed the paymaster's office (diwān al-tartīb) under al-Ḥākim (386-411/996-1021) and al-Zāhir (411-427/1021-1036) and was personally acquainted with

al-Hākīm.³⁹ On al-Musabbihī's significance in the historiography of al-Hākīm's reign, C. H. Becker wrote:

We owe to him nearly everything important and reliable which we know about this era. Maqrīzī alone cites him in the Khiṭāṭ fifty times, often in long passages, and he may have used him as often without citing him. Also Yāqūt, Ibn Khallikān, Ibn Saʿīd, Dhahabī, Ibn Taghrībirdī, Ibn Iyās, and others frequently make use of him.⁴⁰

Al-Musabbihī composed his history, the Kitāb Akhbār Miṣr, on a gigantic scale. It filled forty volumes and was more than thirteen thousand leafs or twenty-six thousand pages in length. Only a tiny fragment for the years 1023-1025 is extant.⁴¹ Al-Musabbihī organized it on a strict chronological pattern, recording the events of the days, months, and years in order. Everything was grist for his mill, from the most important events to the most insignificant.⁴² Clearly, al-Musabbihī's Kitāb Akhbār Miṣr was a detailed source of the greatest value.

Under these circumstances it would not be strange if Yahyā had exploited so precious a source, and, indeed, its neglect would have been a great detriment to the value of his "Continuation."

The discussion in the following pages will undertake the task of demonstrating Yahyā b. Saʿīd's extensive dependence on al-Musabbihī for his information on al-Hākīm's caliphate. Yahyā's description of al-Hākīm's reign

takes up nearly one-third of the total length of his chronicle. It is one of the most important accounts--perhaps, the most important--of the stormy reign of a ruler who was indisputably the most curious and contradictory character in the history of medieval Egypt. Besides his, the fullest accounts of al-Hākīm's reign are contained in Ibn al-Qalānisi's Dhayl Ta'rīkh Dimashq and al-Maqrizi's Itti'āz al-Hunafā'.

There is no obvious connection between al-Musabbiḥī and Ibn al-Qalānisi's Dhayl Ta'rīkh Dimashq, although Ibn al-Qalānisi's account does not conflict in essence with what is known of al-Hākīm's reign from authors who were acquainted with al-Musabbiḥī's annals. Perhaps, Ibn al-Qalānisi's authority took the basis of his account from al-Musabbiḥī which he then embellished, especially in the way of explaining some of al-Hākīm's precipitate and cruel actions.

According to the thirteenth century chronographer Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī, the chief sources available to him on the reign of al-Hākīm were al-Musabbiḥī, his younger countryman al-Qudā'ī (d. 454/1062-1063), and Hilāl al-Ṣābī.⁴³ It is likely that Hilāl al-Ṣābī, who may have been Ibn al-Qalānisi's source, had an eyewitness Egyptian source, since he himself is not known to ever have visited Egypt. There were also Christian sources such as Yahyā and the History of the Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church, which

later Muslim historians ignored. C. H. Becker, a student of Fātimid historical writing, succeeded in identifying only al-Musabbihī and al-Qudā^Cī as important contemporary authors on the era of al-Hākim.⁴⁴

In contrast to Ibn al-Qalānisi's Dhayl Ta'rīkh Dimashq, it appears that al-Maqrīzī's chapter on al-Hākim in the Itti^Cāz al-Hunafā', is based almost exclusively on al-Musabbihī, at least through 405/1015.⁴⁵ Al-Maqrīzī cites al-Musabbihī only three times throughout the extent of the chapter on al-Hākim, but its content embraces numerous congruencies with the passages on al-Hākim in the Khiṭaṭ where, according to Becker, al-Maqrīzī cited al-Musabbihī fifty times. In the Itti^Cāz al-Maqrīzī cites no other authority for the period before 405/1015. A fragment of Ibn Muyassar's (d. 677/1278) history, the Akhbār Miṣr, which is preserved for the years 381-387/991-997, proves on comparison with the corresponding passages in al-Maqrīzī to be a summary of al-Musabbihī, whom Ibn Muyassar cites by name at one point.⁴⁶ What is more, the chronology of al-Hākim's reign in the Itti^Cāz matches that given in other, briefer accounts, such as Ibn Khallikān's biographical dictionary, the Wafayāt al-A^Cyān, Ibn Zāfir's Akhbār al-Duwal al-Munqati^Ca, and Ibn Muyassar's fragment on the first years of al-Hākim's reign. Thus, al-Maqrīzī's complete or nearly complete dependence on al-Musabbihī is beyond question. Most helpfully, the Itti^Cāz preserves the rigorous

annalistic organization of al-Musabbihī's material, bringing information forward within the appropriate divisions of days, months, and years. This fortunate circumstance makes the Itti^Cāz an ideal vehicle for analyzing the relationship of Yahyā and the other historical sources to al-Musabbihī.

This is possible principally through the chronology, which appears in the Itti^Cāz and Yahyā's "Continuation."⁴⁷ The availability of the works of Ibn Khallikān, Ibn Zāfir, and Ibn Muyassar considerably enhances the prospective profitability of a comparison and investigation of the chapters of al-Maqrīzī and Yahyā devoted to al-Hākīm. Ibn Muyassar's fragment, which nominally includes only the first year of al-Hākīm's reign, actually is informative through the fall of Barjawān in 390/1000. Ibn Zāfir and Ibn Khallikān give highly condensed reports of al-Hākīm's reign. Ibn Khallikān includes a biography of al-Hākīm in the Wafayāt al-A^Cyān; it is necessarily very brief and leaves much unsaid, but the biography of al-Hākīm's father, al-Azīz, in which a speech by al-Hākīm to al-Musabbihī is quoted, and the biography of al-Musabbihī himself, leave no doubt that one of Ibn Khallikān's sources was al-Musabbihī.⁴⁸ It appears that Ibn Khallikān's other sources may have taken their initial information from al-Musabbihī, but since all of them have disappeared, it is impossible to explore this relationship.

Ibn Zāfir's chapter on al-Hākīm concentrates principally on the last few years of al-Hākīm's reign.⁴⁹

Although Ibn Zāfir explicitly cites al-Musabbiḥī only once as his source, his dependence is apparent from the few facts he gives concerning some of al-Hākim's extraordinary ordinances and prohibitions as well as the revolt of Abū Rakwa, which took place in 395-397/1005-1007.⁵⁰

The most convincing evidence for the identification of al-Musabbiḥī's Kitāb Akhbār Miṣr as the actual original source (urquelle) of the accounts of al-Hākim's reign given by Yahyā, al-Maqrīzī in the Itti^cāz, Ibn Zāfir, Ibn Muyassar, and Ibn Khallikān in his biography of al-Hākim is the chronology which all five authors give for some of the major events of the reign. This nearly identical chronological pattern is seen in: (a) the succession and dates of the first ministers, whether they be called vizir, wāsiṭa (intermediary), or qā'id al-quwwād (commander-in-chief); (b) the order and dates which new laws were promulgated and abrogated by caliphal fiat; (c) the events of Abū Rakwa's revolt in 395-397/1005-1007. The small number of linguistic congruencies which appear in these accounts will also be cited in the chronologically appropriate places.

Another writer who probably depended on al-Musabbiḥī for his information was Ibn al-Sayrafī (463-542/1071-1147), the author of a treatise on Fātimid vizirs from al-^cAzīz's reign through the early twelfth century, the Kitāb al-Ishāra ilā mān nāla al-wizāra.⁵¹ Its information, which

will occasionally be referred to, often serves to confirm the statements made by the five authors used in this investigation concerning dates and lengths of vizirates. The following chronology represents the consensus of the authors surveyed but especially the concurrence of Yahyā and al-Maqrīzī.

Al-Ḥākim came to power the day of his father's death, Tuesday, 28 Ramaḍān, 386/Oct. 14, 996 at an age of slightly less than eleven and one-half years. At a public assembly allegiance was sworn to him as caliph two days later.⁵²

The swearing of allegiance to al-Ḥākim was the occasion for the fall of the Christian vizir ʿĪsā b. Naṣṭūras, whose prestige had been gravely injured when fire destroyed the Fāṭimid fleet, newly-built for use against the Byzantines, 12 Rabīʿ II, 368/May 4, 996. Al-Ḥākim's father, al-ʿAzīz, had been able to shield ʿĪsā from popular hostility. When the leaders of the Kutāma Berbers absented themselves from the swearing of allegiance to al-Ḥākim out of discontent with Ibn Naṣṭūras, al-Ḥākim was forced to acknowledge this powerful military element in the Fāṭimid state by dismissing Ibn Naṣṭūras and replacing him with al-Ḥasan b. ʿAmmār, a Berber leader. Al-Ḥākim entrusted Ibn ʿAmmār with the supervision of affairs and administration of finances and commissioned him as the intermediary (wāsiṭa) between the

Maghāribā (western or Berber troops) and the government. The Kutāma had asked that a wāsīṭa be appointed from among their number. Al-Hākīm at the same time bestowed the laqab Amīn al-dawla on Ibn ʿAmmār.⁵³

Ibn ʿAmmār's appointment under pressure signified a sharp tilting in the Cairo political order in favor of the Maghāribā and against the eastern troops, Mashāriqa, which included Dailamites but whose primary element was Turks. The result of this tilting was a military revolt in Syria under the leadership of Manjūtakīn, the Turkish wālī of Damascus. Manjūtakīn's revolt was suppressed in Jumādā I, 387/May 12-June 10, 997.⁵⁴

A three-day riot, in which the Maghāribā fought the Turks, ended in the dismissal of Ibn ʿAmmār and his being placed under house arrest, 26 Shaʿbān, 387/Sept. 3, 997. Yahyā says the severity of the conflict stemmed from the murder of a Maghribī (singular form of Maghāribā) in a skirmish between a party of Turks and a party of Maghāribā. Al-Maqrīzī, to the contrary, says that both a Turkish ghulām and a Maghribī were killed in the skirmish. The dropping of a single letter wa, meaning "and," from al-Maqrīzī's text would produce the same reading as Yahyā's. Al-Maqrīzī says that the leaders of the Kutāma then went looking for the Turk who had killed the Maghribī.⁵⁵

The dating of this conflict is in question. Yahyā says it took place Monday-Wednesday, 22-24 Shaʿbān,

387/Aug. 30-Sept. 1, 997. Ibn Muyassar merely says that Barjawān, who succeeded Ibn ʿAmmār, took over the administration on a Friday in Ramaḍān and that Ibn ʿAmmār's administration had lasted eleven months minus five days. Al-Maqrīzī, however, says civil strife took place on two days, the eighth and ninth Shaʿbān/August 16-17, 997 but that Ibn ʿAmmār's dismissal did not take place until 26 Shaʿbān/Sept. 3, 997, which, as we shall see, was the day on which al-Hākim appointed Barjawān to succeed Ibn ʿAmmār in the administration. Al-Maqrīzī, like Ibn Muyassar, also says that Ibn ʿAmmār had held office eleven months minus five days.⁵⁶ Now if Ibn ʿAmmār's tenure of office was five days less than eleven months, his dismissal from office would have taken place 27 Shaʿbān, 387, his administration having begun 3 Shawwāl, 386. Al-Maqrīzī says that he was deposed with three days remaining in Shaʿbān, that is the twenty-sixth. Yahyā does not designate the date of Ibn ʿAmmār's dismissal nor the date Barjawān replaced him in office, but al-Maqrīzī gives the date of the latter event as 27 Ramaḍān, 387, that is, with three days remaining in Ramaḍān; Ibn Muyassar and Ibn al-Sayrafī also state that Barjawān's tenure in office began in Ramaḍān.⁵⁷ However, Ibn Muyassar maintains that Barjawān was installed on a Friday in Ramaḍān, not a Sunday as was the twenty-seventh. What is more, it would be unusual if, at a time when the ruler was a twelve

year-old boy, the supreme office were left vacant for a whole month--26 or 27 Sha^Cbān to 27 Ramaḍān. It is more probable that the new minister would be named on the day that his predecessor was dismissed.

26 Sha^Cbān, the day on which Ibn ^CAmmār was removed, fell on a Friday with three days remaining in the month. According to al-Maqrīzī, Barjawān's administration lasted one day less than two years, eight months. Since his tenure of office ended, as will be seen, when al-Ḥākim had him murdered at the end of Rabī^C II, 390, he must have come into office in Sha^Cbān, 387. Consideration of Fahd b. Ibrāhīm's tenure also indicates that Barjawān took office in Sha^Cbān, not in Ramaḍān.⁵⁸ Thus, although accepting the date of Ibn ^CAmmār's fall as 26 Sha^Cbān would make his tenure in office six days less than eleven months, this is a smaller discrepancy than would result in the tenures of Barjawān and Fahd b. Ibrāhīm if the validity of 27 Ramaḍān were accepted.⁵⁹ The entrance of Ramaḍān into the text tradition may go back to a careless error in the original manuscript or in an abridgement of it.

Yahyā, al-Maqrīzī, and Ibn Muyassar agree that Barjawān restored the stipends which Ibn ^CAmmār had cut off.⁶⁰ At the very beginning of his administration Barjawān associated his Christian secretary Fahd b. Ibrāhīm in the government as his deputy (nā'ib). Ibn

al-Sayrafī dates the conferral of the laqab al-ra'īs (director or superintendent) on Fahd to Jumādā I, 333/May, 988. The other authors mention his reception of the title together with his appointment as Barjawān's secretary.⁶¹

Al-Hākim, now fifteen years of age, had Barjawān murdered on Thursday, 25 Rabī^C II. Both Yahyā and Ibn Khallikān say the murder fell on a Thursday. Yahyā's dating is Thursday, 26 Rabī^C II, 390.⁶² However, the twenty-sixth was in actuality a Friday. The Itti^Cāz also repeats the date 26 Rabī^C II, 390, but the subsequent statement that on Friday, 26 Rabī^C II, 390, which appears to have been the following day, a decree was written announcing and explaining the deposal and murder of Barjawān indicates that the actual murder must have been carried out on Thursday.⁶³ Al-Maqrīzī in the Khitāt, which parallels the Itti^Cāz in much that it says about Barjawān's administration, gives the date of Barjawān's death as Thursday, 26 Rabī^C II, 390 in one place but as 25 Rabī^C II, 389 in another. Taking 389 as an obvious error, Thursday, 25 Rabī^C II, 390/April 5, 1000 was apparently the actual date of Barjawān's murder. The date of Barjawān's murder on Thursday and the public proclamation of his dismissal on Friday have become amalgamated in subsequent tradition into a single, incorrect date.⁶⁴

Barjawān's fall marks the transition of al-Ḥākim into the actual ruler of the Fāṭimid state. All al-Ḥākim's famous decrees and deeds took place after his assumption of real authority. Al-Ḥākim made Fahd b. Ibrāhīm his own secretary and associated him in the administration of affairs with al-Ḥusayn b. Jawhar, 3 Jumādā I / April 11, 1000. Al-Ḥusayn b. Jawhar received the title qā'id al-quwwād, 17 Jumādā II, 390/May 25, 1000.⁶⁵

At this point the fragment of Ibn Muyassar's chronicle, which lumped the events of 387-390/996-1000 under 387, breaks off.

According to al-Maqrīzī, the first of al-Ḥākim's eccentric decrees, promulgated 3 Dhū al-Ḥijja, 390/Nov. 5, 1000, ordered that candles be hung on all the shops (hawānīt) and house doors, in all the sidestreets and thoroughfares. Al-Ḥākim began to make nighttime the customary occasion for his restless riding from place to place, street to street, alley to alley. Fires were lighted in the streets and alleys during the night; the markets and avenues were decorated; candles burned throughout the night while people went about their business, buying and selling. Meanwhile much money was spent on singing and amusement as well as food and drink, and the crowds became ever larger.⁶⁶ Finally, al-Ḥākim was struck by the immorality of the scene he had created. At the end of Muḥarram, 391/Dec., 1000, he ordered women not to

go on the streets after evening prayer and prohibited sitting in wineshops (hawānīt).⁶⁷

Yahyā confirms al-Maqrīzī's statements. In late 390 al-Ḥākim began prowling the streets of Cairo at night. Like al-Maqrīzī, Yahyā specifically mentions that al-Ḥākim travelled both the main streets and the alleys, which took on the appearance of daytime from the number of people crowding them. This condition continued at least until Jumādā I, 392/March 18-April 17, 1002.⁶⁸ Al-Ḥākim ordered nocturnal business hours and illumination resumed in Rabī^c I, 394/Dec. 28, 1003-Jan. 26, 1004. Perhaps al-Ḥākim had terminated the nightly illumination of the streets when he gave up riding in the night during Sha^cbān, 393/June 5-July 3, 1002. When he returned to his nocturnal wanderings, the streets would again be lighted for nighttime business.⁶⁹

Al-Ḥākim ordered his Christian secretary Fahd b. Ibrāhīm, who was governing together with al-Ḥusayn b. Jawhar, executed, 8 Jumādā II, 393/April 14, 1002, a Wednesday. There is disagreement among the authors on the exact date although all of them place the execution in Jumādā I or II, 393. Yahyā says it took place Wednesday, 7 Jumādā I, 393, Ibn Zāfir in Jumādā I, Ibn al-Ṣayrafī in Jumādā II, and al-Maqrīzī, 8 Jumādā II, 393. Two considerations prove the accuracy of al-Maqrīzī's dating. First 8 Jumādā II was a Wednesday; second al-Maqrīzī

states that Fahd b. Ibrāhīm held office five years, nine months, twelve days. This is only one day more than the period of time which had actually elapsed since Fahd b. Ibrāhīm took office at the time of al-Ḥasan b. ʿAmmār's dismissal, 26 Sha^Cbān, 387. A mathematical error, such as counting a short month as thirty days, would explain the missing day.⁷⁰

Al-Ḥusayn b. Jawhar remained alone at the head of the administration after Fahd's sudden fall and execution, which was connected with the first manifestation of al-Ḥākim's anti-Christian feelings. Yahyā and Ibn Zāfir tell in almost identical terms how at the same time as Fahd's execution al-Ḥākim's Christian doctor influenced him.

Yahyā, 256/464:

Ibn Zāfir, Akhbār al-Duwal
al-Munqatiʿa, 60-61:

وقتل الحاكم فهد بن ابراهيم الراس
يوم الاربعاء لسبع خلون من جمادى
الاولى سنة الثلث وتسعين وثلثمائة
واقتر الحسنيين بن جوهري على النظر
فى الامور وقبض الحاكم على كتاب
الندواوين من انصارى واعتقلوا
يوم الاثنين لاربع عشر ليلة خلت
من جمادى الاخر من السنة ثم
اطلقوا بعد اسبوع بمسالة ابن
فتح سهلان بن منشر النصرانى
طبيبه .

فولى وساطة قائد القواد الحسين
بن قائد القواد جوهري ومعه فهد
بن ابراهيم الى ان قتل فى جمادى
الاولى سنة ثلث وتسعين وانفرد
قائد القواد بالنظر وامر بالقبض على
سائر كتاب الدواوين من النصارى
فاعتقلوا ثم اطلقوا بعد اسبوع بشفاة
ابن فتح منصور بن سهلان بن معشر
الطبيب .

Al-Hākīm killed Fahd b. Ibrāhīm the rā'is Wednesday 7 Jumādā I, 393 and placed al-Husayn b. Jawhar over the administration of affairs. Al-Hākīm arrested the Christian secretaries of the ministries, and they were imprisoned Monday, 14 Jumādā II of the [same] year. Then they were released after a week at the request of Ibn Fath Sahlān b. Muqashshar the Christian, [al-Hākīm's] doctor.

The qā'id al-quwwād al-Husayn b. qā'id al-quwwād Jawhar was entrusted with the office of intermediary and with him was Fahd b. Ibrāhīm until he was killed in Jumādā I, 393, and the qā'id al-quwwād was alone in the administration. He ordered the arrest of the Christian secretaries of the ministries, and they were imprisoned. They were released after a week on the intercession of Ibn Fath Mansūr b. Shalān b. Mu^cashshar the doctor.

Al-Maqrīzī does not mention the arrest of the Christian secretaries or their release through Ibn al-Fath's intercession, but he obviously was aware of their arrest because he wrote, shortly after telling of Fahd's execution, "The property of the Christian secretaries who were arrested was seized."⁷¹

Al-Maqrīzī in the Khitāt, on the express authority of al-Musabbihī, places the first construction work on the Rashīda mosque on 17 Rabī^c II, 393/February 23, 1003. "In its [the mosque's] place was a church built of brick [and] around it were Christian and Jewish graves, then it was razed and it was increased [in its dimensions], and the mosque remained there." Under 393 Yahyā says that the church in the Rashīda quarter was a Jacobite church and that when the Jacobites began to restore the ancient church, a group of Muslims attacked the Jacobites, who

were violating a Quranic prohibition by restoring the church, and razed the new construction. Al-Hākim built a great mosque in place of the church.⁷²

Under 393 Yahyā also mentions that al-Hākim prohibited the display and selling of wine; bottles were smashed and wine poured on the ground. Another ordinance forbade women to expose their faces. Still a third applied to funerals. It attempted to ban women from following the processions, weeping and wailing, and the hiring of female mourners or singers to take part in funerals or funeral processions. Yahyā is the only author to mention these particular ordinances, but they were repeated later in al-Hākim's reign.⁷³

In 395/Oct. 18, 1004-Oct. 7, 1005, al-Hākim issued some of his most famous decrees. The first to be promulgated was directed at Jews and Christians. They must wear belts and black turbans as distinguishing marks. Yahyā wrote that the only exception to the decree were the Khaibarites (Khayyābira). Ibn Khallikān preserved a trace of this decree against the protected religious communities (ahl al-dhimma) in his biography of al-Hākim, where he writes, "[Al-Hākim] ordered the Christians and the Jews except the Khayyābira to wear black turbans." Thus, mention of the exception made for this single obscure group has survived in both Yahyā and Ibn Khallikān. Ibn Khallikān placed the decree in 402. This perhaps refers to the reissue of the same decree Friday, 8 Rabī^c II, 403/October 27, 1012. Both Yahyā and al-Maqrīzī mention

that the Khayyābira were specifically exempted from this decree against the ahl al-dhimma. Dr. Muḥammad Ḥilmi Muḥammad Aḥmad, editor of the second volume of al-Maqrīzī's Ittiḥāz, understood the word as al-habābira, that is, doctors. In view of the influence al-Ḥākim's doctors exercised over him, Dr. Aḥmad's reading appears justified. Al-Maqrīzī's date of 7 Muḥarram, 395 for the original decree seems to be a trace of the date Yaḥyā advances, Friday, 17 Muḥarram, 395/Nov. 3, 1004.⁷⁴

After the decrees against the ahl al-dhimma, Yaḥyā mentions one directed against the Sunni Muslims. Al-Maqrīzī provides the date, Ṣafar, 395/Nov. 17-Dec. 16, 1004. On all the mosques, shopdoors, streets, graves, and in similar places curses and insults directed at Abū Bakr, ʿUmar, ʿUthmān, Muʿāwīya b. Abī Sufyān, and the rest of the followers and the ʿAbbāsīd caliphs were written. Ibn Khallikān mentions the same decree in 395. Ibn Zāfir also knows it, but gives no date. All four authors mention the repeal of this decree, which al-Maqrīzī dated to 9 Rabīʿ II, 397/January 2, 1007. Ibn Khallikān also gives the date 397, and Yaḥyā mentions this decree with events of 397.⁷⁵

At approximately the same time, al-Ḥākim issued one of his most extraordinary decrees. This prohibited the buying, selling and eating of several foodstuffs, including the plant mulūkhiyya (Corchoros Olitorius), jirjīr

(watercress), mutawakkiliyya, another edible herb, dalnīs (tellina), a bi-valve shellfish, and all fish without shells. Yahyā, al-Maqrīzī, and Ibn Khallikān all mention this decree under 395. Ibn Zāfir and al-Maqrīzī advance the alleged rationalization for the unusual objects which took al-Hākim's concern. He prohibited mulūkhiyya because of the predilection Mu^Cāwīya b. Abī Sufyān, the first Umayyad caliph (661-680), felt for it. The prohibition against jirjīr was related to ^CĀ'isha, the daughter of Abū Bakr (614-678) and wife of the Prophet, and that against mutawakkiliyya to the ^CAbbāsīd caliph al-Mutawakkil (847-861). Another author, al-Nuwayrī, dated this decree to 24 Muharram, 395/Nov. 10, 1004. This may be how al-Musabbihī originally dated it.⁷⁶

Al-Hākim also outlawed selling and drinking fugqā^C, the local Egyptian variety of beer. Yahyā and Ibn Khallikān mention the prohibition of beer together with the decrees on forbidden food items. Al-Maqrīzī is alone in stating that a separate decree, presumably issued almost simultaneously with that against the various foods, banned the sale and consumption of fugqā^C.⁷⁷

Another decree prohibited entrance to the baths without a small wrap-around apron (mi'zar) covering the midsection. Both Yahyā and al-Maqrīzī mention this edict together with those issued in Muharram, 395, which must have been the approximate time of its issue.⁷⁸

In Rabī^C I, 395/Dec. 16, 1004-Jan. 14, 1005, many elements of the Cairo population gathered together and asked amān from al-Hākīm. Yahyā says the Kutāma had originally tried this tactic and now all the secretaries, financial officers, soldiers, merchants, Christians, and Jews followed their example. Al-Maqrīzī stresses that all the people were in fear, especially the notables, officers, and secretaries as well as the common people (ra^Cyya). All the secretaries and tax collectors (mutaṣarrifūn), both Muslim and Christian, were present. They proceeded to the citadel, kissing the ground along the route. Al-Hākīm granted them his pardon and accepted their petitions. The following Friday he issued a decree of amān separately to each group which had petitioned him. In Rabī^C II, 390 he issued further certificates of amān.⁷⁹

Another curious decree, issued in Rabī^C I or II, 395, ordered that all dogs found in old Cairo (Misr) be killed. So efficiently was this order carried out that supposedly not a single dog remained in the streets of Misr.⁸⁰

The Dār al-Hikma or Dār al-^CIlm (palace of wisdom or knowledge) was opened in the same year. It offered a splendid library to scholars and learned men of all backgrounds and was a center for the propagation of Ismā^Cīlī doctrine. Both Yahyā and al-Maqrīzī tell of the lavish resources which al-Hākīm provided for it.

Al-Maqrīzī says that the Dār al-^CIlm was actually opened in Jumādā II, 395/April 15-May 13, 1005.⁸¹

Another element common to the chronicles of Yahyā, al-Maqrīzī, and Ibn Zāfir is the account of a bedouin rebellion which began in 395 and almost brought down the Fātimid state before its suppression. Its leader was al-Walīd b. Hāshim, known as Abū Rakwa, a self-proclaimed prince of the Spanish Umayyad dynasty. Abū Rakwa found support among the Banū Qurra, a tribe which inhabited the desert west of Alexandria. All three authors tell substantially the same story of the revolt, its near success, and its eventual failure. Abū Rakwa then fled to Nubia where he was captured and brought back to Cairo for execution.

Al-Maqrīzī states at the beginning of his account, placed in the Itti^Cāz under 396/Oct. 8, 1005-Sept. 26, 1006, that al-Musabbihī is the source of his information. The account of Abū Rakwa's rebellion is interpolated without division by year into all three chronicles. Al-Maqrīzī's version is the lengthiest of the three.

Saturday, 17 Jumādā II, 395/April 1, 1005, at ^CUyūn al-Nazr near Barqa in Cyrenaica Abū Rakwa's imamate was formally recognized by the Arabs and Berbers drawn to his support; Yahyā and Ibn Zāfir both mention the formal investiture, but only Yahyā tells the date and place.⁸²

Al-Maqrīzī and Yahyā describe similarly the goals Abū Rakwa professed, although the Itti^Cāz is slightly less

detailed than Yahyā. Abū Rakwa disclaimed any wish for power. His only personal motives were desire for the triumph of Islam and annoyance that the followers and wives of the Prophet should be subjected to cursing and abuse, for, he believed, "They are the imams, the pillars of the faith and founders of the kingdom of Islam." Although Abū Rakwa professed to desire no worldly reward for himself, he promised that whoever helped him would be repaid from the spoils in proportion to the aid he rendered.⁸³

Yahyā and al-Maqrīzī are in disagreement over the date of a battle between Abū Rakwa and Ināl al-Tawīl al-Turkī, the leader of a Fātimid relief party sent to Barqa. Abū Rakwa had invested the city, 13 Rajab, 995/April 25, 1005. Al-Maqrīzī states that al-Hākim dispatched Ināl 15 Sha^cbān, 395/May 27, 1005. Yahyā says that Abū Rakwa defeated Ināl at ^cUyūn al-Nazr in a battle which lasted three days in Dhū al-Qa^cda/Aug. 9-Sept. 7, 1005. It seems unlikely that a column dispatched May 27 would wait until August to attempt the relief of a city under siege. Ibn Zāfir also mentions the defeat of Ināl and the five thousand horsemen who accompanied him. Yahyā differs as to who possessed the force of five thousand horsemen; he attributes it to Abū Rakwa. Thus, despite confusion over every detail, all three sources preserve mention of Ināl's unsuccessful campaign.⁸⁴

There are some verbal traces of a common source in Yahyā and al-Maqrīzī's account of a comet which appeared in 396/Oct. 8, 1005-Sept. 26, 1006. Yahyā says a brilliant star appeared in the sky, May 4, 1006. It was of such brilliance that on moonless nights it shone like the moon. It remained four months, dwindled, and disappeared. Al-Maqrīzī relates the star to the revolt of Abū Rakwa. It rose when Abū Rakwa rose. As its light increased, so did the power of Abū Rakwa. When its light began to fade away and its luster to dwindle, so did the affairs of Abū Rakwa. Finally, when the rebel was captured, the star vanished. Al-Maqrīzī concludes, "The affair of this star in its indication of Abū Rakwa was the most amazing of wonders." Both authors interject the coming of the comet into the midst of their accounts of the revolt, the only extraneous event which is allowed to interrupt the narration of the revolt's progress in either of the chronicles. Verbal similarities are present in such phrases as "the star shone as the moon" and words as idmahalla (it faded away) and ghāba (it vanished).⁸⁵

After the defeat of the relief force under Ināl al-Tawīl, the amir Ṣandal and other residents of the city fled from Barqa by sea. Ṣandal went to Egypt, and Abū Rakwa entered the city. Yahyā says the occupation of the city by rebels took place 3, Dhū al-Hijja, 395/Sept. 8, 1005. Al-Hākim appointed al-Faḍl b. Ṣāliḥ commander of

another army to be sent against Abū Rakwa. Al-Maqrīzī says the appointment was made in Rabī^C I, 396/Dec. 6, 1005-Jan. 4, 1006.⁸⁶

According to al-Maqrīzī, al-Faḍl b. Ṣāliḥ set out from Alexandria and met Abū Rakwa in battle at Dhāt al-Hammām, but Yahyā states that the Fāṭimid commander at Dhāt al-Hammām was an Armenian named Qābil, who was killed in the battle. This difference over the identity of the defeated general at Dhāt al-Hammām is one of the few clear discrepancies between Yahyā's and al-Maqrīzī's versions. Perhaps Qābil was a subordinate of al-Faḍl. Both authors agree on the battle field.⁸⁷

Yahyā, al-Maqrīzī, and Ibn Zāfir agree that al-Faḍl b. Ṣāliḥ was appointed Fāṭimid commander in the course of 396/1005-1006, and that he received the aid of the three sons of Mufarrij b. Daghfal b. al-Jarrāḥ, a powerful bedouin chief in southern Palestine. Abū Rakwa progressed further into Egypt, invading the Fayyum. When al-Hākim posted a security force in Giza across the Nile from old Cairo (Miṣr) under ^CAlī b. Ja^Cfar b. Falāḥ, Abū Rakwa suddenly turned up at Giza and inflicted extensive casualties on ^CAlī b. Ja^Cfar b. Falāḥ's force and then fled back to the Fayyum. Both Yahyā and al-Maqrīzī mention the battle. Yahyā says it took place Friday 19 Dhū al-Qa^Cda/August 17, 1006, and al-Maqrīzī continues that the population awoke Saturday, 20 Dhū al-Qa^Cda to the news

that Abū Rakwa and his troops were entering the Fayyum. Both Yahyā and al-Maqrīzī have preserved a dating error since 19 Dhū al-Qa^cda was actually a Saturday.⁸⁸

Al-Fadl b. Ṣālih then pursued Abū Rakwa back toward the Fayyum where he overtook him and engaged him in battle 3 Dhū al-Hijja, 396/Aug. 31, 1006 at Ra's al-Birka. This time al-Fadl b. Ṣālih was victorious, and the revolt of Abū Rakwa was ended. Yahya says the date was Friday, 3 Dhū al-Hijja, and Ibn Zāfir that the news reached Cairo on Saturday, 4 Dhū al-Hijja. Here again is an example of a dating error which has been preserved in more than one chronicle; 3 Dhū al-Hijja was actually a Saturday.⁸⁹

Al-Fadl b. Ṣālih then pursued Abū Rakwa into Nubia. Both al-Maqrīzī and Yahyā mention negotiations with the king before Abū Rakwa was finally found in a convent on the border of Nubia. Al-Fadl brought him back to Cairo where he was crucified Sunday, 16 Jumādā II, 387/March 8, 1007, at the mosque of Tibr.⁹⁰

The demonstration of the fundamental but certainly not complete correspondence between the sources on the chronology of official appointments and decrees and the events of the rebellion of Abū Rakwa which have just been traced in detail can be carried up through the year 405/1014-1015. In that year al-Maqrīzī's reliance in the Itti^cāz on al-Musabbihī's Kitāb Akhbār Miṣr appears to end. Al-Maqrīzī then devoted only half a page each to the events of 406, 407, and 408.

The preceding discussion demonstrates the extensive congruencies between Yahyā's information and that which al-Maqrīzī took from al-Musabbiḥī. These congruencies would be difficult to explain without identifying al-Musabbiḥī as Yahyā's source. Moreover, the type of information Yahyā drew from al-Musabbiḥī is consistent with the character of al-Musabbiḥī's Kitāb Akhbār Miṣr. It was a vast registry, a type of semi-official diary or journal, intended to tell literally everything one needed or wanted to know about Egypt.⁹¹

Yahyā relied especially on al-Musabbiḥī for a detailed record of the chronology of al-Ḥākim's reign. Unlike almost all other authors of extant histories or historical chapters on al-Ḥākim's reign, Yahyā was a contemporary of the events. He had his own experiences to fill out the chronological skeleton furnished by al-Musabbiḥī, and, as a Christian, Yahyā had a different viewpoint. The chronology of official appointments, dismissals, and executions, preserved in the several sources analyzed, resembles the chronology of official appointments in mid-tenth century Iraq, which numerous chroniclers repeat with a variety of discrepancies and distortions. In that case there was significant evidence that the many histories had as their basis the record of one author, Thābit b. Sinān. It is apparently the same in al-Musabbiḥī's case for al-Ḥākim's reign; at least nine

authors, excluding Yahyā, have used al-Musabbiḥī as their source for this period.⁹²

Thus, it is not at all amazing that when Yahya set about composing a continuation to Eutychius' chronicle, he turned to al-Musabbiḥī, whose Kitāb Akhbār Miṣr was a precious contemporary resource of a quasi-archival nature. No record of another work of similar scope and importance for the same period has reached us. The need for Yahyā and later writers to greatly abbreviate the excerpts they took from al-Musabbiḥī in order to fit them into their works, which were planned along more modest dimensions, is at the root of the confusions which surround some of the events discussed above.

Appendix to Chapter 3The Relationship of Yahyā b. Sa^Cid to ^CAlīb. Muḥammad al-Shimshāṭī's Chronicle

The textual congruencies listed under numbers 1-10 below indicate the very extensive similarities found in the passages on Syria in volume six of Ibn al-Dawādārī's Kanz al-Durar, al-Maqrīzī's Itti^Cāz, Ibn al-Qalānisī's Dhayl Ta'rīkh Dimashq, and the group of chronicles that share Ibn al-Qalānisī's source, the history of Hilāl al-Ṣābī: Abū Shujā^C al-Rūdhrawārī, Ibn al-Athīr, and Ibn Taghrībirdī. Ibn Zāfir may have had access to both Hilāl al-Ṣābī and Ibn al-Dawādārī's source. Yahyā does not preserve the same long textual quotations as the other authors--which would make the classification of his relation to al-Shimshāṭī unquestionable--but he does mention the same principal events, detailed under numbers 1-9, as do the other authors. For the list of governors in number 10, Ibn al-Dawādārī names his source, ^CAlī b. Muḥammad al-Shimshāṭī. The preceding investigation shows that there is ample reason to believe that Yahyā had access to al-Shimshāṭī's chronicle or an abridgement of it.

1. Aleppan and North Syrian affairs, 357-367/967-977 - Qarghuwayh expelled Abū al-Ma^Calī from Aleppo, Bakjūr accomplished a coup d'état against Qarghuwayh, and Abū al-Ma^Calī subsequently reconquered Aleppo.

Yahyā, 117, 119, 123, 125, 189, 190/815, 817, 821, 823, 397, 398.
 Ibn al-Dawādārī, VI, 200, 201,
 Ibn al-Qalānisī, 27, 28,
 Ibn Zāfir, B.M. Or 3685, 17r-18v,
 Ibn al-Athīr, VIII, 597, 598,
 VIII, 611,
 VIII, 682, 683.

2. Alptakīn and al-^CAzīz, events in South Syria and Damascus, 364-368/964-978. On these the following display agreement in most respects including actual phrasing:

Yahyā, 181-184/389-392

Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Caz, I, 238-245,

Ibn al-Dawādārī, VI, 175-180, 186-188,

Ibn al-Qalānisī, 17-20,

Ibn al-Athīr, VIII, 656-661,

Ibn Zāfir, Ferré ed., 31, 32.

Ibn al-Dawādārī and al-Maqrīzī obviously had the same source, which agrees very closely with Yahyā. Al-Maqrīzī gave one long excursus, beginning with the words "as to Syrian events". Ibn al-Qalānisī and Ibn al-Athīr also put the events of these five years under one heading. However, Ibn al-Qalānisī and Ibn al-Athīr's version of these events differs in two basic respects from the other version, although in most respects the two versions are very similar.
 a) Ibn al-Qalānisī and Ibn al-Athīr believe that al-Hasan al-A^Cṣam was still alive at the time when Alptakīn besieged Jawhar at ^CAsqalān. Al-Hasan, according to the other version, had died in 366 and there was no Qarmatian participation in the siege of ^CAsqalān.

b) Ibn al-Athīr and Ibn al-Qalānisī put the date of the battle between al-^CAzīz and Alptakīn in Muharram, 367. This is an impossible date since refugees from Bakhtiyār's army which was defeated at Qasr al-Jass 17 Shawwāl, 367/May 28, 978 (Miskawayh, II, 381, Yahyā, 188/396) took part on Alptakīn's side. Yahyā, Ibn al-Dawādārī, al-

Maqrīzī, and Ibn Zāfir say that the date was in Muharram, 368/August 9-September 7, 978. Yahyā, 183-391, gives it as "seven days elapsed in Muharram, 368", al-Maqrīzī, I, 244, as "seven days remaining in Muharram, 368", and Ibn al-Dawādārī, VI, 188, as "a Thursday seven days remaining in Muharram, 368". Since 7 Muharram, 368 was a Thursday, but 23 Muharram was not, Yahyā's date seems confirmed.

The resemblance between al-Maqrīzī and Yahyā's versions of these events is especially close.

3. Abū Taghlib's flight and death at Ramla in Ṣafar, 369/Aug. 28-Sept. 26, 979. In this sequence of events al-Maqrīzī, Ibn al-Dawādārī and Ibn al-Qalāsanī have a common narrative.

Yahyā, 194-196/402-404,
Miskawayh, II, 392, 401-403,
Ibn Zāfir, B.M. Or. 3685, 15r-16v,
Ibn al-Dawādārī, VI, 191-195,
Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Caz, I, 250-252
Ibn al-Qalānisī, 21-23.

The original version of this account probably was part of the Iraqi anonymous chronicle, which Miskawayh used. Al-Shimshātī may have then adopted it into his own chronicle. Yahyā and Ibn Zāfir are closest to the Miskawayh version. The accounts agree on major points but differ on minor ones. Thus, Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī, who used Hilāl al-Ṣabī as a source, differs from Ibn al-Qalānisī.

4. Events of 370-373/980-983 surrounding Ibn al-Jarrāḥ's flight to Antioch, Yaltakīn's victory over Qassām, and Bardas Phocas' campaign against Hims, which he sacked, and Bakjūr's unsuccessful siege of Aleppo. After the siege of Aleppo had failed, al-^CAzīz invested him as wālī of Damascus. Yahyā, 203-204/411-412,
Ibn al-Dawādārī, VI, 199-201, 203, 205-207, 209-212,
Ibn al-Qalānisī, 25-29,
Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Caz, I, 256-259,

Ibn Zāfir, B.M. Or. 3685, 18v-19r,

Ibn al-Athīr, IX, 6,7

IX, 17,18

Ibn al-Qalānisi, Ibn al-Dawādārī, and al-Maqrīzī show a strong resemblance, enabling the identification of a common source. In contrast to their extended narratives of these events, Yahyā recounts them very briefly and includes additional material, especially on Byzantine-Arab relations and Aleppan affairs. While there is only slight resemblance between Yahyā and the other authors in this case, Yahyā's account is compatible with theirs and mentions the same events. His introduction of additional material tends to obscure the comparison.

5. Munīr al-Saqlabī received Damascus as the newly-appointed Fātimid wālī from Bakjūr who fled to al-Raqqa. Ibn al-Qalānisi, Ibn al-Dawādārī, al-Maqrīzī, and Ibn Zāfir all tell how the occupation of Damascus, 17 Rajab 378/Oct. 31, 988, was carried out under the pretext of a campaign against the troublesome bedouin leader Ibn al-Jarrāh al Tā'ī^C. Yahyā unfortunately is very brief, merely indicating Munīr's arrival without explanation or date.

Yahyā, 225/433,

Ibn al-Qalānisi, 30-31,

Ibn al-Dawādārī, VI, 219-222,

Al-Maqrīzī, I, 259-260,

Ibn Zāfir, B.M. Or. 3685, 19r-19v,

Ibn al-Athīr, IX, 57.

6. Bakjūr's last and fatal attempt to take Aleppo from the Hamdānids, Muharram-Ṣafar, 381/March 30-May 17,991. Yahyā placed the critical battle at al-Na^Cūra as did almost all the other authors. Some of the authors, apparently those having Hilāl al-Sābī as a source, give a detailed account of the battle of al-Na^Cūra. Yahyā, as the authors following Hilāl, said that Bakjūr was crucified upside

down. All the authors are in agreement that Abū al-Ma^Cālī repossessed al-Raqqa and al-Rahba. Yahyā and al-Maqrīzī give very brief accounts. Ibn al-Dawādārī also is very brief and gives the story a unique twist; he suggests that Abū al-Ma^Cālī guilefully lured Bakjūr into making the attack in order to destroy him. The Hilāl al-Sābī group of sources say that Bakjūr was betrayed by his presumed Fāṭimid collaborators, particularly Nazzāl, wālī of Tripoli. Yahyā, 227-435,

Al-Maqrīzī, I, 296,

Ibn Zāfir, 19v-21v,

Ibn al-Qalānisī, 34-39,

Abū Shujā^C al-Rūdhrawarī, Eclipse, III, 208-215,

Ibn al-Athīr, 381 A.H., IX, 85-88,

Ibn al-Dawādārī, VI, 230.

7. Al-^CAzīz learned that Munīr, the wālī of Damascus, was communicating with Baghdad. In reaction to this information, he sent Manjūtakīn against Damascus. Two days before Manjūtakīn's arrival, Nazzāl defeated Munīr at Marj ^CAdhrā, 19 Ramadān, 381/Aug. 13, 991.

Yahyā, 238/436,

Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Caz, I, 269-270,

Ibn al-Dawādārī, VI, 232-233,

Ibn al-Qalānisī, 40,

Ibn Zāfir, 22v-23r.

8. Manjūtakin's prolonged campaigns to take Aleppo, 382-385/992-995, and their final failure. There is considerable confusion among the sources in the transmission of the original report, which is at the basis of all the accounts.

Yahyā, 229-235/437-443,

Ibn al-Qalānisī, 42-44,

Abū Shujā^C al-Rūdhrawarī, Eclipse, III, 217-222,

Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Caz, I, 274, 275, 281, 285, 286,

Ibn al-Athīr, IX, 85-90,

Ibn Taghrībirdī, IV, 117-121,
 Ibn al-Dawādārī, VI, 234-237,
 Ibn Zāfir, 22v-24v.

9. Events of 387-388/997-998 - In response to the political shift at Cairo against the Turkish military, following al-Ḥākim's assumption of the caliphate, Manjūtakīn, wālī of Damascus, rebelled. His request to the Emperor Basil for aid was rejected. Abū Tamīm Sulaymān b. Ja^Cfar b. Falāḥ defeated Manjūtakīn at ^CAsqalān, Friday 4 Jumādā I, 387/May 15, 997. Yahyā and al-Maqrīzī tally closely; Ibn al-Dawādārī and Ibn al-Qalānisī offer a slightly different version. At the same time there took place popular revolts at Damascus and Tyre. The Byzantines vainly extended aid to the population of Tyre. The Fāṭimids re-established order in both places. A Byzantine victory near Apamea turned into defeat, July 19, 988, when Damian Dalassenos the dux of Antioch, was fatally wounded after the enemy resistance had broken down.

Yahyā, 243-249/451-457,
 Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 10, 18, 19,
 Ibn al-Qalānisī, 47-52.

10. Ibn al-Dawādārī, VI, 271-272, includes an abbreviated list of the governors of Damascus, 385-394/995-1004. He explicitly attributes this list to ^CAlī b. Muḥammad al-Shimshātī. Comparison with Ibn al-Qalānisī's detailed description of events in Syria for the same period (Dhayl, 44-62) and with al-Maqrīzī's passages on Syria in the Itti^Cāz shows that Ibn al-Dawādārī has only omitted two very brief occupants of the office, who were mentioned by Ibn al-Qalānisī and al-Maqrīzī. Ibn al-Dawādārī, Ibn al-Qalānisī, and al-Maqrīzī also preserved some of the original author's phrasing, which a comparison of their texts shows up. This congruency indicates that Ibn al-Qalānisī drew, probably indirectly via Hilāl al-Ṣābī, on the same

source as Ibn al-Dawādārī and al-Maqrīzī, ^CAlī b. Muḥammad al-Shimshātī.

a) Manjūtakīn was governor of Damascus until 387: Ibn al-Dawādārī, Ibn al-Qalānisī, 46-47, al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 10-11.

b) ^CAlī b. Ja^Cfar b. Falāḥ succeeded to the governorship of Damascus by order of his brother Sulaymān: Ibn al-Dawādārī, Ibn al-Qalānisī, 47, Itti^Cāz, II, 11.

c) Sulaymān b. Ja^Cfar b. Falāḥ replaced his brother whom he sent to govern Tripoli at Damascus: Ibn al-Dawādārī, Ibn al-Qalānisī, 48, Itti^Cāz, II, 15.

d) Jaysh b. al-Samsāma replaced Sulaymān b. Ja^Cfar b. Falāḥ, Tuesday, 17 Dhū al-Hijja, 387. Ibn al-Dawādārī, Ibn al-Qalānisī, 50, Itti^Cāz, II, 15; al-Maqrīzī gives the date.

e) Jaysh b. al-Samsāma temporarily entrusted Damascus to Bishāra, wālī of Tiberias, 4 Rajab-23 Dhū al-Qa^Cda, 388, when Jaysh resumed his position by order of Cairo: Ibn al-Qalānisī, 52, 53, al-Maqrīzī, II, 18, 19; Ibn al-Dawādārī ignores Bishāra's brief wilāya. Jaysh b. al-Samsāma treated the population of Damascus with exceptional cruelty. He died of leprosy (Ibn al-Dawādārī and al-Maqrīzī) or a fistula (Ibn al-Qalānisī) 7 or 9 Rabī^C II, 390 after a wilāya of 16 months, 16 days (al-Maqrīzī and Ibn al-Qalānisī). Ibn al-Dawādārī, Ibn al-Qalānisī, 53-54, Itti^Cāz, II, 31, 33.

f) Fahl b. Tamīm b. Ismā^Cīl, a Berber, succeeded Jaysh b. al-Samsāma, but he died after only a few months in office. Ibn al-Dawādārī, Ibn al-Qalānisī, 57, Itti^Cāz, II, 45.

g. ^CAlī b. Ja^Cfar b. Falāḥ was appointed wālī of Damascus a second time, 27 Shawwāl, 390: Ibn al-Dawādārī, Ibn al-Qalānisī, 57, Itti^Cāz, II, 45.

h) The dā^Ci Khatkīn al-Dayf took over as wālī of Damascus in Ramaḍān, 392. Ibn al-Qalānisī, 57, Itti^Cāz, II, 46; Ibn al-Dawādārī ignores Khatkīn's brief wilāya.

i) Tizmalt or Tamusalt b. Bikār, a former ghulām of Zīrī, wālī of Qayrawān, succeeded Khatkīn in late 392: Ibn al-Dawādārī, Ibn al-Qalānisī, 58, Itti^Cāz, 46.

j) The khādim Muflih al-Lahyānī succeeded Tizmalt in Muḥarram, 394. Tizmalt b. Bikār died suddenly at Dārya, a village near Damascus, Monday, 2 Safar, 394, soon after having set out toward Cairo: Ibn al-Dawādārī, Ibn al-Qalānisī, 58, 62, Itti^Cāz, II, 46, 48.

Footnotes

¹Bar Hebraeus, Chronography, trans. E.A.W. Budge, (Oxford, 1932) vol. I.

²Canard, Dynastie des H'amdaniides, 19-20.

³Ibn al-Dawādārī, Kanz al-Durār wa Jamī^C al-Ghurār, VI.

⁴Ibid. VI, 272.

⁵Ibn al-Nadīm, al-Fihrist, ed. J. Flügel (Leipzig, 1871-1872), I, I, 154. Following the suggestion of Prof. James A. Bellamy, I have emended "wa nasabuhu" in the text of Ibn al-Nadīm to "wa fīhī", as given by Yāqūt, Irshād al-^CArīb, V, 375.

⁶Yāqūt al-Hamawī, Irshād al-^CArīb, VI, 375, Mu^Cjam al-Buldān, III, 120.

⁷N. Adontz, Armenia in the Age of Justinian, English edition by N. Garsoian (Lisbon, 1969) notes, 388-389, #17.

⁸Ibn al-Azraq, Ta'rīkh al-Fāriqī, ed. B.A.L. ^CAwad, (Cairo, 1959), English introduction, 27, Arabic introduction, 17.

⁹Canard, Sayf al-Dawla Recueil de Textes Relatifs à l'émir Sayf al-Dawla le Hamdaniide, (Algiers, 1934), 145-149; al-Dhahabī, Ta'rīkh al-Islām, B.M. Or. 48, 2v-34, reprinted in Eclipse, II, 194, fn. 1 f, differs slightly at some points from the version published by Canard.

¹⁰As Canard remarked in Vasiliev, Byzance et les Arabes, II, pt. 2, 88, fn. 1.

¹¹Wüstenfeld-Mahler, Vergleichungstabellen, 9.

¹²Canard, Dynastie des H'amdaniides, 674.

¹³Yahyā, PO, 106, 161/804, 369.

¹⁴Ibid., 117/815.

¹⁵Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 127. This information is under the chapter heading 359, but follows events which al-Maqrīzī explicitly states took place in 360. Thus, the meaning of the word fīhā ("in it") is ambivalent.

¹⁶Ibn al-Qalānisī, Dhayl Ta'rīkh Dimashq, 24. Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, 16, Ibn al-Dawādārī, Kanz al-Durar, VI, 201.

¹⁷See appendix to chapter 3, number 5.

¹⁸Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 239-266, Canard, Dynastie des H'amdānides, 696-705.

¹⁹Canard, Dynastie des H'amdānides, 696.

²⁰Al-Maqrīzī, Kitāb al-Mawā^Ciz wa'l-i^Ctibār fī dhikr al-khitāt wa'l-athār (Cairo, 1270/1854), II, 157, gives the dates of Ibn al-Maghribī's arrival in Egypt.

²¹According to Ibn Taghrībirdī, al-Nujūm al-Zāhira, IV, 119. Ibn al-Qalānisī omitted this incident from his version, but Abū Shujā^C al-Rūdhrawarī, Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam, ed. and trans. H. F. Amedroz and D. S. Margoliouth, The Eclipse of the Abbasid Caliphate, III, 218, and Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī in Ibn al-Qalānisī, Ta'rīkh Dimashq, 41, fn. 1, as well as Ibn Taghrībirdī reproduce it under the same chronology, thus revealing the identity of their source. Otherwise, they give the same account of this campaign as does Ibn al-Qalānisī.

²²Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 236, #135, E. Honigmann, Die Ostgrenze des Byzantinischen Reiches (Brussels, 1935), 105.

²³al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 281-282.

²⁴Canard, Dynastie des H'amdānides, 698, fn. 247.

²⁵Yāqūt Mu^Cjam al-Buldān, II, 828, Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 237. Honigmann, Ostgrenze, 106, R. Dussaud, Topographie Historique de la Syrie Antiqué et Médiévale (Paris, 1927), 106.

- ²⁶Also al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 281.
- ²⁷Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 282, Ibn al-Qalānisī, Dhayl, 43, Ibn Zāfir, Akhbār, B.M. Or. 3685, 23v-24r.
- ²⁸Yahyā, PO, 234/442, al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 286.
- ²⁹Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 264, #214.
- ³⁰Ibn al-Azraq, Ta'rīkh al-Fāriqī, B.M. Or. 5803, 113v.
- ³¹Al-Tha^Calibī, Yatīmat al-Dahr, I, 9, Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt al-A^Cyan, III, 401.
- ³²Ibn al-Dawādārī, Kanz al-Durar, VI, 272.
- ³³C. Cahen, "Note d'historiographie", 156-157.
- ³⁴Ibid., 158.
- ³⁵Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 238.
- ³⁶Ibn al-Dawādārī, Kanz al-Durar, VI, 210.
- ³⁷C. Cahen, "Note d'historiographie", 158, fn. 1.
- ³⁸See the appendix to chapter 3, #10.
- ³⁹Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt al-A^Cyān, IV, 377.
- ⁴⁰Becker, Beiträge, 16-17. However, Becker was apparently unaware of Yahyā's historical work, to which he never refers.
- ⁴¹Al-Musabbihī, Akhbār Miṣr, Escorial Library, Codex 534, pt. 2, partially published in Becker, Beiträge, chap. 3, 59-80.
- ⁴²Becker, Beiträge, 17.

⁴³Sibt b. al-Jawzī, Mir'āt al-Zamān, B.M. Or. 4619, 207v., cited by H. F. Amedroz in Ibn al-Qalānisi, Dhayl Ta'rīkh Dimashq, introduction, 5, fn. 2. On al-Qudā^Cī, see Becker, Beiträge, 19-23.

⁴⁴Becker, Beiträge, 15-21. Becker also mentions Ibn al-Muhadhdhib, Ibn al-Taḥḥān, and al-Rūdhabārī, but from the little preserved of their work, their significance appears to have been less than that of al-Musabbihī and al-Qudā^Cī.

⁴⁵Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz al-Hunafā', II, 3-123. Al-Musabbihī is cited II, 60, 66-67, 72. The latter two quotations are actual speeches by al-Hākim to al-Musabbihī.

⁴⁶Ibn Muyassar, Annales d'Égypte (Akhbār Miṣr), ed. H. Massé, (Cairo, 1919), 48, "Ibn Muyassar", EI², III, 894 (Cahen).

⁴⁷No investigation of the sources with the object of evaluating the extent of reliance on al-Musabbihī's Kitāb Akhbār Miṣr would have been possible without the second volume of the new Egyptian edition of the Itti^Cāz al-Hunafā', edited by Dr. Muḥammad Ḥilmi Muḥammad Aḥmad.

⁴⁸Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt al-A^Cyān, IV, 377-380 (al-Musabbihī); V, 292-298 (al-Hākim); V, 371-376 (al-Azīz).

⁴⁹Ibn Zāfir, Akhbār (Ferré), 43-62, of which 51-62 concentrates on the last four years of the reign.

⁵⁰A. Ferré in Ibn Zāfir, Akhbār, 60, fn. 289, comments that "Ibn Zāfir seems to have used [al-Musabbihī's] historical work repeatedly, in particular for the caliphate of al-Azīz." See also Introduction, 13-14.

⁵¹Ibn al-Sayrafī, Kitāb al-Ishāra ilā man nāla al-wizāra, Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 25 (1925), 49-112. The edition also has the reverse Arabic pagination.

⁵²Yahyā, PO, 253/451, al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 3. Al-Maqrīzī actually has 18 instead of 28 for the date of al-Hākim's succession to his father's place as caliph. This flaw incurs frequently in the Istanbul manuscript. Certainly it is the consequence of a copying error.

⁵³Yahyā, PO, 243/451, al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 45, Ibn Muyassar, Akhbār Miṣr, 53. Only Yahyā states that ʿIsā b. Nasturas was executed in Ṣafar, 387. See also Ibn Khallikān's life of al-ʿAzīz, Wafayāt al-Aʿyān, V, 371-376, according to which al-ʿAzīz entrusted al-Hākim to Ibn ʿAmmār's protection before his death. Ibn Khallikān cites al-Musabbihī.

⁵⁴Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 10, Ibn Muyassar, Akhbār Miṣr, 55.

⁵⁵Yahyā, PO, 245/453, al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 12, Ibn Muyassar, Akhbār Miṣr, 55.

⁵⁶Yahyā, PO, 245/453, al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 12-13.

⁵⁷al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 12, 13; al-Khitāt, II, 285; Ibn Muyassar, Akhbār Miṣr; Ibn al-Sayrafī, al-Ishāra, 27/86.

⁵⁸Al-Maqrīzī remarked that Fahd's service at the head of the administration had lasted five years, nine months and twelve days at the time of his deposition, 8 Jumādā II, 393/April 14, 1002. This points to Fahd's entry into the highest position on precisely 26 Sha^Cbān, 387. None of the other dates proposed either for Fahd b. Ibrāhīm's appointment or dismissal would accord with this figure for his tenure in office.

⁵⁹It is difficult to know how Prof. B. Lewis, "Bardjawān", EI², I, 1041-1042, came up with the date 28 Ramadān, 387 for Barjawān's appointment.

⁶⁰Yahyā, PO, 245/453, al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 12, 13, Ibn Muyassar, Akhbār Miṣr, 55. While al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Muyassar mention in the proper chronological place that Ibn ^CAmmār had cut the stipends, Yahyā merely says, "The affairs of the easterners came to a standstill." (waqafat amūr al-mashāriqa).

⁶¹Yahyā, PO, 245-246/453-454, al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 14, Ibn al-Ṣayrafī, al-Ishāra, 27/86.

⁶²Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt al-A^Cyān, I, 270, gives two dates, 26 Rabī^C II, 390, and 15 Jumādā I, 390, but the second date has nothing to do with al-Musabbihī.

⁶³Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 25, gives the figure 16, an orthographic error of the type mentioned above, fn. 52.

⁶⁴Yahyā, PO, 254/462, al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 25, 27, 28, al-Khitāt, II, 4, 285, Ibn Muyassar, Akhbār Miṣr, 55. Ibn Zāfir, Akhbār (Ferré), 43, 60, and Ibn al-Ṣayrafī, al-Ishāra, 27/86, confirm that Barjawān's death fell in Rabī^C II, 390 in contradiction to B. Lewis, "Bardjawān", EI², I, 1041-1042.

⁶⁵Yahyā, PO, 254/462, al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 29, al-Khitāt, II, 14, 15, Ibn Muyassar, Akhbār Miṣr, 56, Ibn al-Ṣayrafī, al-Ishāra, 28/85, Ibn Zāfir, Akhbār (Ferré), 60-61.

⁶⁶Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 37, 38.

⁶⁷Ibid., II, 38.

⁶⁹Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 45, 48.

⁷⁰Ibid., II, 44. Fahd's murder is listed under 392, but from the events listed under this heading, it is clear that the proper heading should be 393. Yahyā, PO, 256/464, Ibn Zāfir, Akhbār (Ferre), 61, Ibn al-Ṣayrafī, al-Ishāra, 28/85.

⁷¹Al-Maqrīzī, Ittiḥāz, II, 44.

⁷²Al-Maqrīzī, al-Khiṭaṭ, II, 282, Ittiḥāz, II, 44, Yahyā, PO, 256-257/464-465. For "zuyyida fīhi" in the Khiṭaṭ should probably be substituted "zuyyida samkuhu", as I have done here.

⁷³Yahyā, PO, 257-258/465-466.

⁷⁴Yahyā, PO, 260, 300/468, 508. al-Maqrīzī, Ittiḥāz, II, 53, 83, Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt al-Aḥyān, V, 293, #742 (=W. M. de Slane, Ibn Khallikan's Biographical Dictionary, III, 454, fn. 5). De Slane first proposed the reading hayābira, the plural of habar (doctor). The influence Christian doctors enjoyed with al-Hākim makes de Slane's proposal appear a realistic one. The Khaybarites were the Jewish community of Khaybar, an oasis one hundred miles removed from Medina along the Medina-Syria road. The Jewish population of Khaybar won lasting fame from the dogged defense it raised against the Prophet's ghāzīs in 7 A.H./628. There is, however, no apparent reason why al-Hākim should have felt particular charity for the Jews of Khaybar. In fact, according to A. Grohmann, it is far from clear that there was any Jewish community in Khaybar at this time. EI, "Khaybar", II, 869-870.

⁷⁵Yahyā, PO, 260, 272/468, 480, al-Maqrīzī, Ittiḥāz, II 54, 69, Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt al-Aḥyān, V, 293. On these vegetables and fish, see Ibn Zāfir, Akhbār (Ferre), 43, fn. 234, 235, Dozy, Supplément aux Dictionnaires Arabes, II, 838, and Steingass, Persian-English Dictionary (London, 1892), 534.

⁷⁶Yahyā, PO, 260/468, al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 53, Ibn Zāfir, Akhbār (Ferré), 44, Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt al-A^Cyān, V, 293. For these vegetables and fish, see Ibn Zāfir, Akhbār (Ferré), 43, fn. 234, 235, Dozy, Supplement aux dictionnaires arabes, II, 838, and Steingass, Persian-English Dictionary (London, 1892), 534.

⁷⁷Yahyā, PO, 260/468, Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt al-A^Cyān, V, 293, al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 53.

⁷⁸Yahyā, PO, 260/468, al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 53.

⁷⁹Yahyā, PO, 261/469, al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 54-56.

⁸⁰Yahyā, PO, 261/469, al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 55-56, Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt al-A^Cyān, V, 293.

⁸¹Yahyā, PO, 263/471, al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 56-57.

⁸²Yahyā, PO, 263/471, Ibn Zāfir, Akhbār (Ferré), 45.

⁸³Yahyā, PO, 262/470, al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 60-61.

⁸⁴Yahyā, PO, 265/473, al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 61, Ibn Zāfir, Akhbār (Ferré), 45 and fn. 243. According to Ferré, al-Nuwayrī dates the battle in Sha^Cbān and gives a more detailed version of it than does al-Maqrīzī. However, contrary to Ferré's statement, al-Maqrīzī does not date the battle to Sha^Cbān.

⁸⁵Yahyā, PO, 267/465, al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 61.

⁸⁶Yahyā, PO, 266, 268/474, 476, al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 61.

⁸⁷Yahyā, PO, 268/476, al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 61-62.

⁸⁸Yahyā, PO, 268/476; al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 63.

⁸⁹Yahyā, PO, 269-270/477-478, al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 64, Ibn Zāfir, Akhbār, (Ferré), 46.

⁹⁰Yahyā, PO, 270-271/478-479; al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 64-65. Al-Maqrīzī actually gives the date 17 Jumādā II, but Sunday was in fact the sixteenth. Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt al-A^Cyān, V, 297, gave the date as Sunday, 27 Jumādā II, 397, which also was not a Sunday.

⁹¹Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt al-A^Cyān, IV, 377.

⁹²C. H. Becker, Beiträge, 17, lists them: al-Maqrīzī, Yāqūt, Ibn Khallikān, Ibn Sa^Cid, al-Dhahabī, Ibn Taghrībirdī, Ibn Iyās, to which can be added to names Ibn Zāfir and Ibn Muyassar.

CHAPTER 4

THE VITA CHRISTOPHORI AND THE GREEK SOURCES;

CONCLUSION TO PART I

In addition to the Arabic historical sources which have been studied in the preceding chapters, the picture of the materials to which Yahyā had access can be completed by consideration of some sources which have been previously identified or whose existence was hinted at by Rozen. While Rozen directed his attention to Yahyā's Greek or possible Syriac sources, Ḥabīb Zayāt conclusively identified an Arabic source in an article which appeared a quarter of a century ago.¹

The only one of Yahyā's Arabic sources to have been explicitly identified, this is a hagiographical account of the life of Christopher, the Melkite patriarch of Antioch, 959-967, by Ibrāhīm b. Yūhannā, who lived at Antioch in the second half of the tenth century.² Ibrāhīm b. Yūhannā's primary fame is as a translator of Greek patristic works into Arabic.

The narrative of the Vita Christophori, which Zayāt found in an extensive collection made by the seventeenth-century compiler Boulos Za^cīm, son of the

Patriarch of Aleppo Makarios III (1647-1672), deals principally with the events of Christopher's life but also reveals many details of church history in the Arab lands. The Patriarch was a native of Baghdad, who, after receiving his education at Aleppo, was the private secretary to Sayf al-Dawla's subordinate at Shayzar. In this role Christopher won the regard of Sayf al-Dawla who was happy to ratify his election as patriarch of the Melkite community of Antioch in 348/959.

Yahyā reproduced a relatively small part of Ibrāhīm b. Yūhannā's account of local Antiochan affairs and the city's relations with its ruler. Ibrāhīm concentrated historical matters in one section of the Vita explaining the conditions in which the local Antiochan authorities contrived the murder of Christopher in May, 967.³

There are sufficient factual and verbal congruencies between the life of Christopher and Yahyā's version of the same events to verify Zayāt's conclusion that the one served as a source for the other.⁴ Nevertheless, there are some divergencies and additions as well as considerable editing in Yahyā's version.

In composing his life of Christopher, Ibrāhīm b. Yūhannā had an Arabic historical source. This source cannot be precisely identified, but a two-page passage in Miskawayh's Tajārib al-Umam which also appears as part of the historical background in Ibrahim b. Yūhannā's

sketch of Christopher's career in Antioch clearly reveals that the two writers shared a common source.⁵ As Miskawayh rarely mentions Antioch in his history and does not even comment on the Byzantine conquest of the city in 969, the Tajārib al-Umam must be ruled out as the origin of the report in the Vita Christophori.

The decade of the 960's was a stormy one at Antioch. The city's position changed from being comfortably removed from the Byzantine frontier to bordering on the front lines, and, finally, at the end of the decade Antioch fell into the hands of the Byzantines. In his last years Sayf al-Dawla's control had weakened over the ghilmān who administered his dominions. An official named Ibn al-Ahwāzī incited Rashīq al-Nasīmī, Sayf al-Dawla's governor at Antioch, to revolt, with the false claim that Sayf al-Dawla, who was at Mayyāfāriqīn, would never return to Syria. Rashīq al-Nasīmī launched his revolt in Dhū al-Qa^cda, 354/Oct. 29-Nov. 28, 965, when he marched against Qarghuwayh, Sayf al-Dawla's deputy at Aleppo, whom he failed to dislodge from the city citadel. Rashīq was killed at Aleppo, but the rebels and Duzber, who succeeded Rashīq as their leader, remained in control of Antioch. Neither the rebels nor Qarghuwayh could subjugate the opposing force.

The Vita Christophori, Miskawayh, and Yahyā all mention these events, but, while Miskawayh totally neglects

the actions of the Patriarch Christopher, the Vita and Yahyā go on to state that Christopher withdrew to the monastery of Dayr Simān for the duration of the revolt rather than sanction the rebellion, or appear to sanction it, by remaining in the city. In this way Christopher won the special favor of Sayf al-Dawla, but alienated some local individuals who desired autonomy for Antioch.

Soon after 1 Rajab, 355/June 9, 966, Sayf al-Dawla returned to Aleppo and spent one night there. Once again Miskawayh takes up the narration of events along with Yahyā and Ibrāhīm b. Yūhannā. The amir met Duzber, his collaborator Ibn al-Ahwāzī, and their Antiochan supporters at Sab^cīn on the Bālis road and crushed the rebels.⁶

At this point Miskawayh's interest in Antioch ends. Miskawayh's source was certainly written in Arabic, but it is difficult to say what sort of composition it might have been. Factual and verbal elements from this source passed into Yahyā's chronicle together with what Ibrāhīm b. Yūhannā added concerning Christopher's relations with Sayf al-Dawla and the local population. The last, it should be noted, were not mentioned by Miskawayh.

The Vita and Yahyā give the following conclusion to Christopher's story. After Sayf al-Dawla's death, Feb. 8, 967, the enemies of the Patriarch Christopher took revenge on him although he had interceded on their behalf after the revolt. The Patriarch was murdered May

23, 967, and his body was thrown into the Orontes. The Byzantine conquest of Antioch, Oct. 28, 969, appeared as divine retribution to Christopher's hagiographer.

Ibrāhīm b. Yūhannā's story of how the Byzantines captured Antioch provided the basis for Yahyā's account. In many respects Ibrāhīm b. Yūhannā, and thus Yahyā, describe the seizure in the same way as does the Byzantine chronicler Skylitzes.⁷

The Greek Sources

Finally, there remains the question of Yahya b. Sa'īd's Greek sources, which is no less intricate and confused than that of his Arabic sources. Rather the paucity of extant Byzantine Greek chronicles from the tenth and early eleventh centuries renders the possibility of an ultimate solution to this problem remote. While it is clear that Yahyā has made use of Greek sources, and often the places where he had made use of them are apparent, the difficulty lies in identifying what the actual sources were. V. R. Rozen's chapter "On the question of Yahyā's sources" is still the basic study on the materials he drew on for Byzantine and local east Anatolian and north Syrian events.⁸

Rozen demonstrated the relationship between the passages of Yahyā and Theophanes Continuatus concerning the arrival of the Holy Mandilion at Constantinople, the fall of Romanos I Lekapenos, and then of his sons Stephan

and Constantine, and the subsequent machinations to restore the Lekapenoi to the throne, ending with Romanos' death in July, 948.⁹ The Mandilion was the towel, formerly preserved in Edessa, which formed a revered icon of Christ. The comparison of these passages shows an almost literal correspondence between the two sources in content, order of arrangement and manner of expression. Theophanes Continuatus' source for these events was the chronicle of Symeon the Logothete, who was alive during the reign of Romanos Lekapenos. Thus either directly or through an intermediary source Yahyā drew on the chronicle of the Logothete. However, his dependence on this source must have ended with the death of Romanos Lekapenos, for his chronicle includes almost no information on the internal history of Byzantium during the reign of Constantine Porphyrogenitos. Yahyā is valuable for Constantine's eastern policy and the wars with the Hamdānids, for which it appears there must have been both Arabic and Greek sources available to him.

The many events after the death of Constantine Porphyrogenitos for which Yahyā must have had Byzantine Greek sources include the succession of Nicephoros II on the death of Romanos II, the plot which brought John Tzimiskes to the throne in Nicephoros' place, John Tzimiskes' death and the assumption of power by Basil II and Constantine VIII under the tutelage of Basil the

Parakoimomenos. In all these cases Yahyā and the Byzantine authors are essentially in agreement, although there are frequent differences on points of detail. An instance worthy of mention is the assassination of Nicephoros Phocas. Yahyā states that Nicephoros told the Empress Theophano, perhaps not earnestly, of his intention to castrate her two sons Basil and Constantine and to place his brother Leo Phocas upon the imperial throne. According to him, it was this which led to Theophano's collusion with John Tzimiskes. Yahyā's story, while not found in Skylitzes and Leo Diaconus and not generally accepted by modern historians, is repeated by Zonaras.¹⁰ Eastern authors such as Ibn al-Athīr and Bar Hebraeus also tell the same story.¹¹ It must be assumed that there is some similar basis for all his information on Byzantium.

Other sources of information besides Yahyā b. Sa'īd for the same years are few. Theophanes Continuatus breaks off at midpoint in the reign of Romanos II (959-963). Leo Diaconus describes only the years 959-976. The chronicle of John Skylitzes is the single independent narrative of events between 976 and 1034 to have survived. The later compilation of Zonaras only occasionally adds something new to Skylitzes. However, the accuracy of the latter's account for this period is highly overrated, at least in respect to events on the eastern

frontier, where Skylitzes' version can be compared to those of Yahyā b. Sa^cīd and other eastern writers.

Thus, if Yahyā makes a statement which fails to correspond with the Greek sources, this does not eliminate the possibility of a Greek source for the statement, since the meager collection of Byzantine chronicles preserved can hardly be estimated the total historical production of an age.

Generally Yahyā does not have much to say about affairs in Constantinople. For the most part, only the consecration of new patriarchs and changes in emperors seem to catch his attention. Excepting these instances and the wars in Bulgaria, he was primarily concerned with events in the eastern provinces of the empire.

Yahyā's perception of events in the eastern provinces and on the eastern frontier is close enough to that of the Greek authors to indicate that he had one or more credible Byzantine sources at his disposal, but the connection of any of the surviving chronicles with his narrative cannot be demonstrated.

An interesting case in point was a Byzantine victory, 15 Ramadān, 349/Nov. 8, 960, in which Leo Phocas ambushed Sayf al-Dawla and inflicted a humiliating defeat upon him. All the contemporary Byzantine chroniclers mention such a battle, which is easily dated, since it took place during the short period from summer, 960 to March, 961 while Nicephoros Phocas was campaigning on

Crete and his brother Leo Phocas replaced him as Domestic of the East. Yahyā is deficient only in neglecting the role of Leo Melissenos, strategos of Cappadocia.¹²

The great part that members of the Phocas family play in Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's narrative from 342/953 through Nicephoros Phocas' assassination in 969 raises the question whether he may have used a source of the same genre as the Phocas family chronicle which M. Siuziumov identified as a source for Leo Diaconus and John Skylitzes.¹³ In the absence of any actual evidence, the answer must be in the negative, but it is interesting that Yahyā held a very favorable view of Nicephoros, much more favorable than that of the Constantinople-centered accounts of his reign. In any case, judging from the events he chose to mention, his source or sources for Byzantine events had an eastern provincial origin.

Rozen came to the conclusion that Yahyā had used a local church chronicle of the Melkite confession similar in character to Sāwīrus b. al-Muqaffa^C's History of the Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church.¹⁴ Al-Mas^Cūdī (d. c.346/957) testified to the existence of such a chronicle, which he had seen in the Church of St. Cassian in Antioch.¹⁵ There is no reason to assume that the chronicle would not have been available to Yahyā when he arrived at Antioch in 1015 or shortly afterwards.

Rozen included in his study of Yahyā's sources a list of forty dates, which he gave according to the

Seleucid chronology, usually accompanied by the corresponding Hijrī date. Rozen thought it probable that Yahyā drew these dates from particular sources, perserving the chronology used in them, which he then correlated with the Hijrī chronology, to which he was accustomed.¹⁶

Among the new sources he found at Antioch were those which used the Seleucid chronology.¹⁷ The Seleucid system of chronology was used in Syria and continued to flourish there in Yahyā's time. Thus, for instance, the excerpts which he gives from the chronicle of the Logothete follow Seleucid dating rather than the Byzantine dating from creation and the indiction year, as was normal in contemporary Byzantine chronicles. "The great majority of the chronological notations according to the Seleucid era concern purely Byzantine or Christian affairs, events in Constantinople, Antioch or North Syria and Asia Minor, generally such as are either passed over in complete silence by Muslim writers or are mentioned very casually and without any exact details," Rozen points out.¹⁸ He concludes that when Yahyā spoke of Byzantine affairs, dated by the Seleucid chronology, he was drawing, directly or indirectly, on Greek sources. The Greek sources he complemented with Arabic sources where necessary. However, the actual chronicle at Antioch may have been in either Syriac or Arabic rather than in Greek.

Rozen proposed that the local Melkite chronicle which al-Mas^ʿūdī saw in the Church of St. Cassian at Antioch might have served as a source for local church history, especially the duration of patriarchal tenures of office and important events in Constantinople.¹⁹

This is a reasonable hypothesis, probably correct, but not susceptible of verification. In its favor it should be noted that almost every event pertaining to Antioch throughout Yahyā's "Continuation" is dated according to the Seleucid chronology. Where the Seleucid date and the corresponding Hijrī date do not agree, generally it is the Seleucid date that is more reliable. Also a high proportion of the Seleucid dates which Yahyā gives relate in some way to Antioch itself or northwest Syria. He is exceptionally accurate concerning the dating of patriarchal tenures of office for all the eastern Melkite patriarchates. This would seem to indicate an ecclesiastical source. For the years prior to the conquest of Antioch, he often dates events by the year of the Muslim caliphate, again indicating an Antiochan origin.

The significance of the Seleucid dates in Yahyā is not altogether clear. Out of a total of fifty-four Seleucid dates in the whole chronicle, twenty relate to events which took place after he was resident in Antioch and therefore in a position to be an eyewitness source.²⁰

Does this mean that he had a source that continued into the 1030's or that the use of Seleucid dates was standard in the cultural region of north Syria or by Syrian Melkite Christians and that he had adapted himself to this custom?

Although his Seleucid dates may all refer to events drawn from a local ecclesiastical source, it is possible that Yahyā may have taken them from more than one source. Generally, he does not date events relating to the wars against the Arabs, except those during the reign of Romanos Argyros, by the Seleucid chronology.

Thus, we find that only one Byzantine source--the chronicle of the Logothete--can be identified by name although Yahyā's use of a second source of local Antiochan provenance seems certain. That these were by no means the whole range of his Byzantine sources is obvious from the abundance of facts he relates concerning the reign of Basil II and the wars he carried on in Bulgaria, information which, it would seem, could only have come from Byzantine sources. Whether he made use of his Byzantine sources in the original Greek is unknown. His local or eastern provincial source or sources may also have been in either Greek, Arabic, or Syriac.

Conclusion to Part I

The review of Yahyā's Byzantine sources completes the survey of his materials in writing the "Continuation." Several of his Arabic authorities have been positively

identified--Thābit b. Sinān, Ibn Zūlāq, ^CAlī b. Muḥammad al-Shimshātī, Muḥammad b. ^CUbaydallāh al-Musabbihī as well as the Byzantine Arabic hagiographer Ibrāhīm b. Yūhannā--and the existence of an anonymous chronicle source for Iraqi events in the decade of the 360's/970's has been pointed out. As for Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's Byzantine sources, only one, the chronicle of the Logothete, can be identified, while Rozen's proposal of an Antiochan Melkite chronicle appears warranted.

These findings justify Yahyā's claim to have used a wide range of sources, but it is clear that the identifiable works hardly exhaust the question of his sources. The existence of several diversified types of information suggest that he had other sources.

Among these sources are those pertaining to the following categories:

1. The Egyptian church--Yahyā describes in detail the schism in the Egyptian church as well as the popular and officially-sanctioned persecution it suffered.²¹ None of the authors following Ibn Zūlāq repeat this information, which is unique to Yahyā. Probably he had an Egyptian ecclesiastical source.
2. Byzantine-Ḥamdānid diplomacy--Yahyā records several treaties and agreements between the Byzantines and the Ḥamdānid rulers of Aleppo. These were concluded in 359/969-970, 371/981, 373/983, and 376/986-987.²² The only other author who mentions these treaties is Ibn

al-^CAdīm, who had some archive at his disposal but also used Yahyā as a source. It is possible that Yahyā had access to some sort of archive or diplomatic register at Antioch. The same archive could have provided him with the names of the successive Byzantine governors at Antioch and also some of his unique information on Syrian events and Byzantine military activities in Syria.

3. The early Fāṭimids--Yahyā gives a continuous narrative of the history of the Fāṭimids in Syria and Africa.²³ It appears that he took it as an entity, perhaps somewhat abridged, from an Ismā^Cīlī source.
4. Iraqi and Būyid history--From the point in 979 when Miskawayh breaks off, Yahyā continues to deal with Iraqi affairs, although in decreasing detail, until 991. Some of his information appears to be unique, for instance, his story of how Sharaf al-Dawla, ^CAdud al-Dawla's eldest son, suspicious that his father's death was being concealed, broke into his father's convalescent chamber to which entrance was strictly forbidden. ^CAdud al-Dawla then exiled Sharaf al-Dawla to Kirmān where he was badly placed to compete in the struggle for power which commenced subsequently.²⁴
5. Christian documents--All six documents which Yahyā reproduces in his "Continuation" are related to Christian affairs or the history of the Christian church. One is a letter from the newly-installed Patriarch of Antioch Agapios (978-996) to ʿĪlyā, his counterpart at Alexandria,

stating Agapios' arguments concerning his right to leave his former position as Bishop of Aleppo to become Patriarch of Antioch.²⁵ Three are decrees, issued by al-Ḥākim in the last year of his life, which allowed the Christians to reconstruct some of their demolished religious establishments and granted them personal and financial security from arbitrary state oppression.²⁶ The other two documents are reproductions of King Abgar of Edessa's letter to Christ and Christ's reply.²⁷ No specifically Muslim documents are reproduced anywhere in the chronicle.

6. Eyewitness sources--The only one of Yahyā's oral sources whose identification can be proposed is Abū Ya^Cqūb Ishāq b. Ibrāhīm b. Anastas. Rozen ingeniously suggested that Yahyā's explanation of the malady which caused al-Ḥākim's strange and mysterious behavior was based on extended observation of the Caliph by Abū Ya^Cqūb, his Christian doctor. An inadvertent sign of Yahyā's special involvement is the phrase "May God bless him" by which Yahyā once refers to Abū Ya^Cqūb. Rozen pointed out that this is the only case in the whole "Continuation" where he uses that phrase and that his superb knowledge of al-Ḥākim's medical condition cannot be explained better in any other way than by the availability to him of a well-informed

eyewitness source.²⁸ Of course, a conclusive identification of Abū Ya^cqūb cannot be made on so little evidence nor can any other of his eyewitness sources be identified.

Hilāl al-Sābī, who recounted Iraqī history in this period, has also been proposed as a possible source for Yahyā. However, the two authors do not have much in common beyond the same account of Bardas Skleros' flight to Iraq, but even this story, which Hilāl continues from the final pages of Miskawayh, differs somewhat in Yahyā's version. In any case, Yahyā and Hilāl probably took the account from a common source.

Presumably by the beginning of al-Ḥākim's caliphate in 386/996, Yahyā b. Sa^cīd was in a position to rely to a greater extent on oral sources and on his own observations. On the other hand, preserved historical materials for the period after 1000 becomes much rarer, a circumstance which reduces the chance of identifying further written sources. Although it has been possible to increase the number of known sources for Yahyā b. Sa^cīd's "Continuation" by five (including the anonymous Iraqi chronicle), the question of his sources cannot yet be considered resolved. The origin of much, perhaps most, of his information still remains in doubt. Nevertheless, those sources which can be identified at present show that Yahyā b. Sa^cīd followed a high standard in selecting

his sources, which were generally of widely-accepted reliability.

Footnotes

¹"Vie du patriarche melkite d'Antioche Christophore (d. 967) par le protospathaire Ibrahīm b. Yūhannā: Document inédit du Xe siècle", Proche Orient Chrétien, II (1952), 11-38, 333-366. Also Canard's review in Byzantion, 23 (1953), 561-569.

²Georg Graf Geschichte der Christlichen Arabischen Literatur, II, Studi i Testi, 133, (Vatican City, 1947), 45.

³H. Zayāt, "Vie du patriarche melkite", chapters 11-19, 333-361.

⁴Yahyā's excerpts from the hagiography are on pages 72, 80, 99, 100, 106-112, 115-116, 124-127/770, 778, 797, 798, 804-810, 813-814, 822-825 in PO.

⁵Miskawayh, Tajārib al-Umam, II, 214-215.

⁶Canard, Dynastie des H'amdānides, 219, on Sab^Cin.

⁷Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum, ed. J. Thurn, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae, V, (Berlin, 1973), 271-273.

⁸Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 075-091.

⁹Ibid., 087-088, Yahyā, PO, 32-34/730-732, Theophanes Continuatus, Chronographia (Bonn, 1838), 432, 440-441.

¹⁰Zonaras, Epitome Historiarum (Leipzig, 1871), IV, 89.

¹¹Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, VIII, 606-608 (359 A.H.), Bar Hebraeus, Chronography, I, 173.

¹²Yahyā, PO, 83-84/781-782, Theophanes Continuatus, Chronographia, 479, Skylitzes, Synopsis 250, Iul. Pollux in Leonis Diaconi Historiae Libri Decem, ed. C. B. Hase, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae (Bonn, 1828), 418, and Leo Diaconus, 22-25, Honigmann, Ostgrenze, 85-86.

¹³M. Siuziumov, "Ob istochnikakh Leva Diakona i Skilitsii", Vizantiiskoe obozrenie, II (1916), 106-166.

¹⁴Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 090-091.

¹⁵Al-Mas^Cūdī, Prairies d'Or, ed. and trans. Barbier de Meynard, (Paris, 1914), III, 409-410.

¹⁶Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 080.

¹⁷Ibid., 081.

¹⁸Ibid., 080.

¹⁹Ibid., 090

²⁰Ibid., 077-080, lists forty dates. He missed a forty-first, the consecration of Patriarch Nicholas of Antioch, Yahyā, CSCO, 244. Thirteen more Seleucid dates, contained in the final extant section of the chronicle, were unknown to Rozen. Yahyā, CSCO, 252, 254, 255, 256, 259, 260, 265, 267, 272.

²¹Ibid., 15-21, 28-29, 81-85/713-719, 726-727, 779-783.

²²Ibid., 125-126, 199, 205, 209/823-824, 407, 413, 417.

²³Ibid., 49-65/747-763.

²⁴Ibid., 201-202/409-410.

²⁵Ibid., 172-181/380-389.

²⁶Yahyā, CSCO, 229-233.

²⁷Ibid., CSCO, 263-264.

²⁸Yahyā, PO, 272/480, CSCO, 219, Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 028-029.

PART II: HISTORIOGRAPHY

CHAPTER 5

YAHYĀ B. SA^CĪD'S DESCRIPTION OF THE REIGN OF AL-HĀKIM BI AMR ILLĀH

The single figure, political or religious leader, prince or caliph, who emerges as a personality rather than an official personage in Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's chronicle is the third Fātimid caliph of Egypt, al-Hākim bi Amr Illāh (386-411/996-1021), whose bizarre doings have endowed his name in history with an eerie fascination. Both medieval chroniclers, including his own contemporaries, and modern historians have been hard pressed to account for his unusual and often apparently contradictory acts. Many medieval chroniclers repeat the opinion that "[al-Hākim] was generous with money, [but] a shedder of blood [who] summarily killed a great number of the notables of his state as well as other [people]."¹

Most nineteenth and twentieth century historians have been unsympathetic to al-Hākim. Among other things they have called him, "the most stupid tyrant of which the history of Islamism makes mention" (von Hammer-Purgstall), "the most barbarous and maniacal of the tyrants who have defiled the annals of Mohammedanism" (de Sacy), "the most

capricious and strange individual in the entire history of Muslim Egypt" (Wiet), or, more mildly, "the interesting, psychopathic caliph" (Goitein).²

However, a number of historians, most frequently scholars of the religious aspects of his reign, have chosen to dissent from the general view of al-Hākim. In his rule they see elements of idealism, democracy, and social justice.³ R. P. Dozy and A. Müller in the nineteenth century and P. K. Hitti, M. G. S. Hodgson, P. J. Vatikiotis, and the Druze scholar S. N. Makarem in the twentieth are adherents of this tendency.

The sharply contrasting conceptions of the caliphate of al-Hākim directly reflect the type and quality of historical sources available for this period. To proponents of the revisionist view, such as Vatikiotis, modern historians have been too hasty in accepting the outlook of the medieval chroniclers who, he says, considered al-Hākim's legislation maniacal and were unreasonably prejudiced. In Hitti's opinion the antagonism which al-Hākim's innovations provoked was responsible for the image of him commonly held by the Sunnite historians as a "medieval Nero, tyrannical and unbalanced to the point of mental derangement." Although different measures were at stake, the same cause gave rise to the equally unfavorable attitude toward him which the Christian writers held. The acts which aroused the Sunnite Muslims and the Christians

included the abolition of the five pillars of Islam, the public cursing of the first three Rāshidūn ("Rightly-guided") caliphs who followed the Prophet himself, the revival of ancient dress regulations against the dhimmīs (free non-Muslim subjects: Jews and Christians) and the destruction of the Church of the Holy Resurrection at Jerusalem.⁴

The sources for the caliphate of al-Ḥākim can be divided into two basic groups: a) historical chronicles and b) Ismā^ʿīlī and Druze doctrinal treatises and documents. The historical chronicles with one exception are of non-Ismā^ʿīlī composition. This opens them to suspicion of religious bias, especially as religious feelings appear to have motivated many of al-Ḥākim's radical actions. The only extant Ismā^ʿīlī chronicle to deal with the reign of al-Ḥākim is the ʿUyūn al-Akhbār by the fifteenth century dā^ʿī (missionary or propagandist) Idrīs b. al-Ḥasan. It is of little historical value, according to the pre-eminent student of Ismā^ʿīlī literature, W. Ivanow, who described the ʿUyūn al-Akhbār with surprise and disbelief. "It is remarkable," he wrote, "that [Idrīs b. al-Ḥasan] himself had so little idea of the real history of Ismailism that he accepted many anti-Ismaili versions of fiction treating them as true, and tried to patch up the cracks between the traditional ideas and the word of supposed 'history' by improvising compromise versions."⁵ The ʿUyūn al-Akhbār

remains unpublished and has commanded no attention, not even a single reference, in the debate and historiography concerning al-Ḥākim. In fact, there is no evidence that there ever existed any specifically Ismā^Cīlī historical tradition.⁶

The utilization of the second category of sources, Ismā^Cīlī and Druze doctrinal material, raises complex questions. Like the chroniclers, the authors of these documents were subject to a religious bias. In addition, the Ismā^Cīlī tendency to discuss exoteric phenomena in an esoteric terminology greatly complicates the historian's task in interpreting the documents. Still, religious documents are the only possible counterweight to the overwhelmingly non-Ismā^Cīlī character of the standard historical sources.

For the reign of al-Ḥākim the collection of letters, treatises, and decrees, known as the Druze scriptures, is of principal interest. These, however, pertain to the period after 408/1017-1018, the year in which, it appears, the doctrine of al-Ḥākim's divinity was proclaimed by the first Druze propagandists (du^Cāt). Of the somewhat more than 120 Druze letters comprising the scriptures, less than a third actually were composed during the reign of al-Ḥākim.⁷ These include polemic and apologetic treatises, letters concerning the hierarchy of the chief du^Cāt and their relationship to each other, excurses on the role of

women and the Druze manner of divorce, and even one document explaining the divisions of knowledge into fields. Such documents are of greater interest for the study of the sect's own constitution and development than for the broader history of the political development of al-Ḥākim's caliphate. Only a very small number of documents pertain primarily to political events. Those include a decree prohibiting the use and manufacture of wine, a proclamation of the Druze faith, a letter from the leader of the movement to al-Ḥākim's appointed successor (wālī ^Cahd) and another to the chief qādī, and two tracts dealing with two victorious battles between the Druze and angry opponents.⁸

Because the Druze documents pertain only to the period after 408/1017-1018 and because of their unavailability in a readily accessible edition,⁹ a discussion of them has not been included in this chapter. To do so would raise a series of extremely involved questions, which go far beyond the scope of the present study. For example, reconciliation of even the chronology of events mentioned in the Druze documents with the accounts of the chroniclers has proved beyond the capacities of scholars.¹⁰

In contrast to the topical interest and frequent obscurity of religious documents, the historical chronicles allow the formation of a coherent picture of al-Ḥākim's reign. The crux of the problem is whether the description the chroniclers set forth of al-Ḥākim is

an accurate one; it certainly is not favorable. The overwhelming impression they give is of a ruler at times generous and just, more often cruel and brutal, but always obsessively conscious--to the point of whimsy--that absolute power lies in himself. As the chroniclers, including Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd, are unanimous in considering the reign of al-Ḥākim as abnormal or bizarre, the data found in the chronicles must be invalidated or at least reinterpreted before a revision of the consensus concerning his personality can take place. This is especially true as the charges made by Vatikiotis, Hitti, and others of the same persuasion do not represent the results of detailed analyses but are only the impressions of scholars more or less conversant with the sources. Nevertheless, their statements do serve to point out the need for a more penetrating appreciation of the actual structure and viewpoint of the chronicles available for the reign of al-Ḥākim since at present there is no rigorous critique of the sources.

The rest of this chapter will be devoted to studying Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's account of the reign of al-Ḥākim in regard to its accuracy and fairness. In fulfilling this objective, first his description of the most important aspects of the reign will be outlined in detail. Secondly, the arguments of some of the critics of the viewpoint he represents will be summarized and considered. Finally,

the reality of al-Ḥākim's reign, as it can best be established from the testimony of independent sources (especially those representing divergent communal affiliations), will be reconstructed. In all three parts of this chapter, only statements and accounts which themselves have the ring of veracity will be introduced since, as was inevitable, a great quantity of folk tales of the most fantastic nature have accumulated around the mysterious personality of al-Ḥākim.

Until recently it was possible to write that the main historical sources for al-Ḥākim's reign were Yahyā b. Saʿīd and Ibn al-Qalānisī.¹¹ The appearance in print in 1971 of al-Maqrīzī's chapter on al-Ḥākim in the Ittiʿāz al-Hunafā' changed this situation. This must now be recognized as the single best factual source on al-Ḥākim's reign for all but the final six years, 406-411/1015-1021.¹² Al-Maqrīzī depended on the portion of al-Musabbiḥī's history recounting events from the beginning of al-Ḥākim's reign through 405/1014-1015. From that point al-Musabbiḥī was apparently not available for his use until the period Jumādā II, 414-Dhū al-Ḥijja, 415/Aug. 21, 1023-March 3, 1025. The volume from al-Musabbiḥī's history embracing the end of 414 and all of 415 is the only one to have survived. Today it is in the library of the Escorial.¹³

As the study of Yahyā's sources in part I shows, Yahyā drew directly on al-Musabbiḥī. He found the Kitāb

Akhbār Miṣr a valuable resource, especially in matters of chronology. However, unlike al-Musabbihī and the other chroniclers of al-Ḥākim's reign, Yahyā attempts to explain why al-Ḥākim acted in the way he did and what motivated him. Thus, it is fitting that an investigation of prejudice in the chronicles of al-Ḥākim's life begin with Yahyā b. Sa^cīd.

The Description in Outline

Yahyā begins his history of al-Ḥākim with the assassination of the eunuch Barjawān in late Rabī^c II, 390/April, 1000 when al-Ḥākim emerged at age fifteen as the de facto ruler of Egypt and the Fāṭimid state. Al-Ḥākim began to prowl the streets and alleys of Cairo and al-Fustāt and soon ordered the nighttime illumination of the markets.¹⁴ Several of al-Ḥākim's ordinances and decrees have already been mentioned in the discussion of the relationship between Yahyā b. Sa^cīd and al-Musabbihī.¹⁵ They included orders that commerce be carried on at night in candlelit streets; that women must cover their faces; that they must cease weeping and wailing in funeral processions; that dress regulations against Jews and Christians be reinforced; that Abū Bakr, ^cUthmān, Mu^cāwiya b. Abī Sufyān, and the Companions of the Prophet be execrated on plaques mounted in public places; that some quite harmless popular foodstuffs, such as mulūkhiyya, watercress, and all fish without shells as well as a

local beer (fugqa^C) be prohibited; that all dogs be killed. Such decrees were to be promulgated, retracted, and re-issued throughout al-Ḥākim's reign.

Yahyā refers for the first time to anti-Christian activities on al-Ḥākim's part in connection with the execution of the Christian member of the top administrative twosome, Fahd b. Ibrāhīm, 7 Jumādā I, 393/March 14, 1003, and the week-long imprisonment of Christian bureaucrats the following month. In the same year, Yahyā says, al-Ḥākim prevented the Jacobite and Nestorian Christians from rebuilding churches in the Rāshida quarter and erected a mosque in their place. He had the Melkite Christians transferred from the quarter where al-Azhar stands today to the quarter of al-Ḥamrā in Cairo, prohibited the selling of wine, and ordered that all wine-shops and drinking places be closed. In the same year Yahyā first refers to ordinances against women.¹⁶

Among the spate of decrees with social intent that al-Ḥākim issued in 395/1004-1005 was one which ordered Jews and Christians to wear belts (zunnārs) and black turbans as distinguishing marks (ghiyār). On a day in Rabī^C I, 395/Dec.-Jan., 1005 Jews and Christians were among the many groups who gathered to ask amān from the Caliph. He satisfied their request, issuing certificates guaranteeing their lives and property.¹⁷

The situation of the Christians in Egypt in 397/1006-1007 was still sufficiently tranquil that Yahyā thought to interject a lengthy digression concerning a debate over the proper date of Easter which rent the Christian communities of Syria, Palestine, and Egypt in that year.¹⁸ The threat which Abū Rakwa's rebellion posed Egypt between 17 Jumādā II, 395 and 16 Jumādā II, 397/April 1, 1005-March 9, 1007 probably brought about gentler treatment of the Christians. Yahyā tells how al-Ḥākim, at the urging of his Christian doctor, disregarded his own earlier prohibition against drinking wine, and the people reverted to their former way of life.¹⁹

However, when the doctor, Abū Ya^cqūb b. Anastās, died in 397/1006-1007, al-Ḥākim reintroduced the complete ban on drinking wine, which he later broadened and strengthened from time to time during his reign until it included the selling and transporting of raisins and honey also. Jars of wine were smashed, and the ingredients for producing wine were thrown into the Nile. Yahyā comes back to these essentially anti-Christian measures sporadically in his history of al-Ḥākim.²⁰

He represents the position of the Christians as worsening dramatically during 398/1007-1008. Al-Ḥākim banned the customary Palm Sunday procession at Jerusalem as well as in the rest of the Fāṭimid state. The first Christian properties which al-Ḥākim ordered seized were

the endowments (waqfs) of all the Christian churches and monasteries in al-Fuṣṭāṭ.²¹ This order marked the beginning of the most extreme phase of al-Ḥākim's anti-Christian persecutions which within four to six years led to the confiscation and destruction of almost all the churches and monasteries in Egypt. Yahyā mentions by name only a few of the churches destroyed: the Church of the Virgin at Damascus and St. Mary al-Qanṭara at al-Fuṣṭāṭ in 399/1008-1009, the Church of the Resurrection after 5 Ṣafar, 400/Sept. 23, 1009, and the monastery of Dayr al-Qusayr and St. Mary al-^CAjūz at Damietta, one of the most beautiful churches in the whole Muslim empire, according to Yahyā, in Ramaḍān, 400/April, 1010.²² Later under 403/1012-1013 he states that al-Ḥākim razed all the churches of the Fāṭimid caliphate with the exception of the monastery of Abū Maqār (Makarios) at al-Isqīṭ and the monastery of Mt. Sinai where local conditions prevented the execution of al-Ḥākim's orders.²³

A corresponding harshening of the dress restrictions upon Jews and Christians took place at the same time. In 399/1009-1010 al-Ḥākim ordered Christians to wear crosses and Jews bells around their necks in the public baths to distinguish themselves from Muslims. In Muḥarram, 401/August-September, 1010, al-Ḥākim modified the dress restrictions. He commanded that the belts (zunnārs) which Christians and Jews wore in obedience to

his edict of 17 Muharram, 395/Nov. 3, 1004 must be black in color. He ordered a further modification, 8 Rabī^C II, 403/October 27, 1012. In addition to black mantles and turbans, Christians must wear a cross hanging from their necks which would be the distance from the tip of the extended index finger to the tip of the thumb in length. A week later al-Hākim increased the proscribed length and width of the cross to a royal cubit (about 26 inches)²⁴ and the thickness to two-thirds of a finger's length. Jews were compelled to wear wooden balls of corresponding size in place of the cross.²⁵

Two other restrictions published at the same time forbade Christians to ride horses; they were allowed to ride only more humble animals. Their stirrups were to be of wood and their saddles and bridles of unornamented black leather. No Christian could hire a Muslim servant.²⁶

Yahyā mentions two particular cases of persecution aimed at Christian secretaries in government offices (diwāns) after al-Hākim imprisoned them for a week, 14-21 Jumādā II, 393/April 20-27, 1003. A number of secretaries, including the future vizir Mansūr b. ^CAbdūn, in the diwān al-Shām and the diwān Misr (the ministries of Syria and Egypt respectively) were accused of some infraction and fined in 398/1007-1008. Among the guilty were Muslims also but it was especially the Christians, Yahyā says, whom al-Hākim was interested in punishing.

Christian property was confiscated, and they themselves were hung by their hands in the open where they were exposed to the weather. Some died. Others, who converted to Islam, were pardoned for the original infraction. Yahyā leaves no doubt that the object of the crack-down was to obtain conversions to Islam. While Mansūr b. ʿAbdūn remained steadfast in his faith, he did everything that he was able in order to deliver the Christians.²⁷

In or soon after Rabīʿ II, 403/October 20-November 17, 1012 al-Hākīm ordered the recording of the names of all Muslim secretaries who had either been dismissed or retired from the diwāns so that they would be available to replace the Christians. Yahyā claims that al-Hākīm could find no Muslim substitutes for the Christian secretaries, officials, and doctors such was their dominance in those professions.²⁸ He believes that the edict of 15 Rabīʿ II, 403/November 3, 1012, which ordered that the crosses Christians were obliged to wear be enlarged to a royal cubit, was intended to persuade the Christian bureaucrats, to whose employment there was no alternative, to accept Islam.²⁹ In this way the Caliph hoped to Muslimize the administrative service.

Al-Hākīm's policy of persecution soon began to pay dividends. As rumors--both true and false--of the regime's oppressive acts increased, many senior secretaries and administrators (mutaṣarrifūn) converted to Islam out of

fear. The Christian masses followed their example. Soon the majority of Christians had converted. "For days at a time," Yahyā writes, "one would not see a Christian on the streets."³⁰

By the end of 403/1012-1013, al-Ḥākim had succeeded in destroying almost all the churches and achieved the conversion of a large proportion of the Christians in the capital cities. Al-Ḥākim apparently expended most of his energy in persecutions in the most urbanized area. Outside of Cairo and al-Fustāṭ, Yahyā says, the Egyptian Christians did not apostatize in large numbers.³¹

Statements of both Yahyā and the contemporary Coptic chronicler bishop Michael of Tinnīs, the continuator of Sāwīrus b. al-Muqaffa^c, indicate that mass conversions probably began in 402/1011-1012. Both say that the Christian converts had been worshipping as Muslims for nine years when al-Ḥākim allowed them to return to their own faith in 411/1020-1021.³²

Yahyā also accuses al-Ḥākim of putting to death the Melkite patriarch of Alexandria Arsenius, July 4, 1010, whom he himself had named to the post of patriarch, 11 Rajab, 390/June 17, 1000. He attributes no motive to al-Ḥākim. This action appears to be only a part of his generalized anti-Christian feelings.³³

Astonishingly, in the midst of these organized anti-Jewish and anti-Christian campaigns, al-Ḥākim appointed

two Christians to head the administration: Mansūr b. ʿAbdūn from 18 Ṣafar, 400 - 4 Muḥarram, 401/October 11, 1009-August 18, 1010, and Zurʿa b. ʿIsā b. al-Nastūras, 13 Muḥarram, 401-12 Ṣafar, 403/August 27, 1010-September 2, 1012.³⁴

Al-Ḥākim granted to both Jews and Christians the right to emigrate freely to the Byzantine empire, Yahyā reports, as a sign of his beneficence and kindness in their regard in Ṣafar, 404/August 12-September 9, 1013. They were allowed to take with them whatever property they could carry and to sell their real estate and non-portable possessions without hindrance. Yahyā apparently considers this a generous settlement of the question of Christian properties, although concurrent sales by many people must have produced a glutted market and netted only a fraction of the real worth. Both those who had converted to Islam and those who had remained Christians were allowed to emigrate. However, no compulsion was used. The choice was left to the individual himself. He claims that al-Ḥākim was moved to grant free emigration when he learned that many Christians, including some of his mamlūks who were of Rūmī ancestry and had been compelled to convert to Islam, were covertly escaping to Byzantine territory by bribing the road and border guards.³⁵ The ordinance permitting free emigration was in effect at least for one year; Yahyā himself emigrated to Antioch in 405/1014-1015.³⁶

There is no indication that he felt al-Hākim's motives in granting Christians permission to emigrate were anything but sincere and generous.

Yahyā does not come back to the condition of the Egyptian Christians until the final two years of al-Hākim's reign. In this period there was a complete reversal in al-Hākim's feelings toward them. In this sudden shift Yahyā emphasizes the importance of al-Hākim's personal affection for Anba Salmūn, the hegumen of the Melkite monastery of Dayr Tūrsīnā. Al-Hākim had probably become acquainted with Anba Salmūn in the course of his frequent ramblings in the Jabal al-Muqattam (hills). The hegumen complained to him of the miserable conditions of the monks of Dayr Tūrsīnā and asked for the return of the monastery's confiscated waqfs. Al-Hākim surprisingly acceded to his request. Yahyā implies that this first sign of leniency toward the Christians took place between the first day of 410 and Rabī^c II, 411/May 9, 1019-July 25, 1020, probably toward the end of the period.³⁷

In his narrative Yahyā reproduces three decrees which al-Hākim issued to the Christians. The first, issued in Rabī^c II, 411/July-August, 1020, permitted the rebuilding of the monastery of Dayr al-Qusayr, the restoration of its waqfs, and the congregation of Christians there to worship. The second decree, granted in Jumādā II, 411/September-October, 1020, ordered the preservation

of the remaining churches in and outside of Jerusalem and the church of Lydda and the restoration of their waqfs. The third in Sha^cbān/November-December, 1020 guaranteed amān to all Christians and included their children, relatives, possessions, and land. It served as authorization for the Christians, who had been petitioning al-Ḥākim in droves, to return to their original faith. Recantation of Islam, as Yahyā points out, is punishable by death in Islam.³⁸ Muslims were very much disappointed in al-Ḥākim's sudden change of heart while members of the Christian upper stratum hesitated to recant Islam in fear that al-Ḥākim was only trying to trick them into revealing their true feelings.³⁹

Yahyā believes that Anba Salmūn's influence was paramount in bringing about the amazing transformation in al-Ḥākim's most deeply-held prejudices. Anba Salmūn would meet al-Ḥākim every day when he was on his way to the desert. The Caliph would come to watch the rebuilding of the monastery Dayr al-Quṣayr and gave money for the completion of the project. He even wore wool as if an apprentice to Anba Salmūn. The reconstruction of the Coptic monasteries in the area of al-Qarāfa also caught his interest. Al-Ḥākim's interest in the Christian monastic communities at this time is mentioned by the Coptic History of the Patriarchs as well as by Yahyā b. Sa^cīd.⁴⁰

Naturally, Yahyā has far less to say about al-Ḥākim's attitude toward the Sunni Muslims than he does about his treatment of the Egyptian Christians. He does mention that, in addition to publicly condemning the first three Rāshidūn Caliphs, the Companions, and all the ^CAbbāsīd caliphs in 395/1004-1005, al-Ḥākim inflicted every scornful gesture and degradation possible upon the Sunnis. However, he indicates that during the revolt of Abū Rakwa, who represented himself as a champion of the true Sunnī form of Islam, the Caliph ordered that the anti-Sunni inscriptions be removed.⁴¹

In Ramadān, 399/April-May, 1009, al-Ḥākim decreed that the prayers of al-qunūt, which had been forbidden since 370/980-981, and al-duḥā be reinstated in public worship and repeated the injunction against insulting the first three caliphs. These concessions to his Sunni subjects, as Yahyā comments, showed a willingness to condone free choice in religious matters, but after only a brief period al-Ḥākim again banned the prayers of al-qunūt and al-duḥā. Yahyā believes that al-Ḥākim intentionally devised this scheme to bring out into the open those who held sincere Sunni sentiments in order that he might eliminate them. After a short time, probably in 400/1009-1010, al-Ḥākim again permitted the Sunni prayers and dropped the formula Ḥayy ^Calā khayr al-^Camal (Hasten to the best of deeds) which Jawhar had added to the call

to prayer in 969 when he conquered Egypt.⁴² Yahyā does not say thereafter that these privileges were at any time withdrawn from the Sunnis. Again in Shawwāl, 403/April-May, 1013, al-Hākim repeated his prohibition against abusive or insulting references to the Rāshidūn caliphs and other Sunni cult figures.⁴³ It can be concluded from what Yahyā says that after early attempts at persecution al-Hākim followed a policy of mild reconciliation toward the Sunnis.

He observed that the populations of Cairo and al-Fustāt lived in vivid fear of al-Hākim on account of widespread executions by his regime. These reached a highpoint in Rabi^c I, 395/December, 1004-January, 1005.

[Al-Hākim] loosed his sword, shedding the blood of all people according to their class until he put to death the leaders of the Kutāma [Berbers]⁴⁴ and [both] the eminent men and the non-entities of his state. He killed all those in the prisons, and they remained empty for a long period. When an individual stood accused of something either large or small, he had him executed and [his body] burned. He continued acting thus for some time.⁴⁵

All the secretaries of the diwāns, the financial officers (al-^cummāl), representatives of the army, the merchants, the common people, the Christians and the Jews, following the example of the Kutāma, gathered one day to ask al-Hākim's forgiveness and amān, which the Caliph then willingly granted to every group and category of the population. These guarantees of security did not prevent

al-Hākīm from further killing. In the year 400/1009-1010, Yahyā writes,

Al-Hākīm's murder of everyone in his state intensified, and he loosed his sword on the leading people of his state and the humble among the secretaries, the officers, the army, and the common citizens. He cut off their hands and surpassed every limit in that. His lands fell into disorder, and the leaders of his people disappeared.⁴⁶

From the passing remark that "his lands fell into disorder", one surmises that the death or flight of many people accustomed to leading and administering must have thrown Fātimid Egypt into confusion. However, caution against reading too much into a single, isolated comment must be exercised. For example, as to the economic condition of Egypt, Yahyā does not say that it was at all depressed except during two periods of abnormal Nile floods. The first of these, which, according to him, began in 397/1006-1007 and lasted until the end of 399/August 24, 1009, was due to the insufficiency of the Nile flood. He does not mention famine in Egypt in 396/1005-1006 although he refers to a great famine throughout the Maghrib in that year. The second period of Egyptian famine which he identifies was due to a superabundant Nile flood in 408/1017-1018 when parts of Cairo were flooded with great resulting hardship.⁴⁷ Excepting these brief periods, he tacitly implies that it was a time of at least normal prosperity.

In Yahyā's survey of Fāṭimid foreign policy and relations with the Syrian provinces, his comments on Byzantine-Fāṭimid relations, 996-1021, are worthy of particular notice. Especially important in his statement that a Byzantine embassy was in Cairo when the Emperor Basil II invaded Syria, 6 Shawwāl, 389/Sept. 20, 999. After Basil had completed his campaign and departed from Muslim territory as of 5 Muḥarram, 390/December 17, 999, Barjawān sent the Melkite Patriarch of Jerusalem, Orestes, to accompany the Byzantine ambassador back to Constantinople where a treaty was eventually signed. The Byzantine ambassador returned from Cairo to Constantinople before Barjawān's death, 25 Rabī^c II, 390/April 4, 1000, but from Yahyā's words it is impossible to precisely date the signature of the treaty.⁴⁸

Peace with the Byzantines was maintained throughout al-Ḥākim's reign although toward its end relations became strained. In spite of the Byzantine-Fāṭimid treaty, al-Ḥākim made at least one unsuccessful attempt, without dispatching a large army from Egypt, to gain control of Aleppo, the principal strongpoint of Arab government in north Syria, before he finally succeeded in bringing the city under his authority in 406/1015-1016. The keystone of the policy Basil II followed toward north Syria was the maintenance of an independent Aleppo; and a treaty signed in 358/969 obligated the Byzantines to come to the

city's defence in case of attack.⁴⁹ In retaliation for its capture, the Emperor Basil II ordered all travel and trade relations between the Byzantine and Fāṭimid states suspended. The only exception to this general prohibition was made in favor of Ṣāliḥ b. Mirdās, the chief of the Kilāb tribe. It was Ṣāliḥ who was the actual conqueror of Aleppo, but the Fāṭimids had cleverly deprived him of the spoils of victory. Although Yahyā does not specifically say that the Fāṭimid coup in gaining control of Aleppo was the cause of the rupture, the fact that he mentions Basil's order directly after telling how the Fāṭimids seized Aleppo appears to indicate a causal relationship between the two events.⁵⁰

Shortly before his death in January, 1021, according to Yahyā, al-Ḥākim was in contact with Gēorgi of Abkhazia, the heir of David, Duke of Upper Tao, whom the Emperor Basil had despoiled of his inheritance when David died in A.D. 1000. Gēorgi wanted to create an offensive alliance between himself and al-Ḥākim with the goal of undertaking hostilities against Basil.⁵¹ Yahyā does not actually say that al-Ḥākim agreed to Gēorgi's suggestions. At any rate, death removed al-Ḥākim before the plan could come to fruition and terminate twenty-one years of peace between the Fāṭimids and Byzantium. Basil had refrained from interfering in Syrian affairs in this period, although his ambitious and adventuresome governors at Antioch did not always co-operate with his policy.⁵²

Syrian events receive a relatively extended treatment in Yahyā's discussion of al-Ḥākim's reign. He relates how the Fāṭimids slyly increased their influence in Aleppo, becoming the principal outside supporters of Mansūr b. Lu'lu'. Mansūr's father Lu'lu' was a former ghulām of Abū al-Faḍā'il Sa^Cīd al-Dawla (381-392/991-1002), the last Ḥāmdanid who actually governed the amirate of Aleppo. Lu'lu' deprived Abū al-Faḍā'il's heirs of their inheritance. After Lu'lu' died in 399/1008, Mansūr b. Lu^Clu^C made himself unpopular by his heavy-handed rule. When Ṣālih b. Mirdās overthrew him in 406/1015-1016, the Fāṭimids took advantage of the situation to make themselves rulers of Aleppo. During the last years of al-Ḥākim's reign--the actual date is unknown--the Fāṭimid wālī at Aleppo, ^CAzīz al-Dawla Fātik, rebelled against al-Ḥākim and solicited aid from Basil. At the time of al-Ḥākim's death, north Syria was still in rebellion.⁵³

There was also unrest in southern Syria. When ^CAbd al-Raḥīm b. Ilyās, the wālī ^Caḥd al-muslimīn (the heir apparent to al-Ḥākim's secular functions), had arrived as governor at Damascus in 409/1018-1019, he found the army units there hostile to him and al-Ḥākim quick to suspect him of rebellion. He initially gained the favor of the people by permitting them to drink wine and listen to singers, but his stingy treatment of the soldiers soon alienated them completely. Fighting broke out between them and his supporters among the local population. The

former party had the best of it, but before the fighting ended, a large part of the city had burned. The local ahdāth (a faction of politically-organized young men) rose up and took the town back from the soldiers. This turbulent period ended when ^CAbd al-Rahīm's supporters put down the ahdāth and succeeded in re-establishing his authority.⁵⁴

In the midst of these events, ^CAbd al-Rahīm allowed a Kurdish leader, Ibn Tālshalīl (?), to attack the Druze who were propagating their doctrine in the Wādī Taym between Sidon and Damascus. To protect himself against the consequence of this error, for ^CAbd al-Rahīm soon realized that the attack on the Druze had brought him al-Hākim's resentment, he sent to al-Hasan b. Mufarrij b. Daghfal b. al-Jarrāh, a powerful Palestinian bedouin chieftain, to obtain his support.⁵⁵

This action transformed al-Hākim's annoyance into suspicion. In Ramadān, 401/April-May, 1011, al-Hasan's father Mufarrij had waylaid a caravan, taking the newly-appointed governor of Syria Yārūkh to Damascus, near Gaza. For the next two years and five months, until Muharram, 404/July-August, 1013, Mufarrij held Ramla and all Palestine except the coast in hostility to Cairo. Mufarrij proclaimed the amir of Mecca as amir al-mu'minīn (an honorific denoting the Caliph). Finally, in Muharram, 404, al-Hākim sent an army commanded by ^CAlī b. Ja^Cfar b. Falāh

to retake Palestine. Mufarrij's death coincided with this expedition, which retook Ramla and scattered the bedouins without effort. This rebellion was only one of many reasons why the mercurial Banū al-Jarrāh were regarded with lasting distrust at Cairo.⁵⁶

ʿAbd al-Rahīm's negotiations with al-Ḥasan b. Mufarrij sparked the Caliph's suspicion of him. When ʿAbd al-Rahīm received al-Ḥākim's order to return to Egypt, Yahyā says that he set out immediately with an army but had gone no farther than Ramla when he received another order from al-Ḥākim--by then satisfied with his obedience--to return to Damascus. As the strength of the Banū al-Jarrāh was centered around Ramla, until ʿAbd al-Rahīm had bypassed the city it could not be known whether he was obeying al-Ḥākim or marching against him.

What Yahyā says indicates that Syria and Palestine were no closer to becoming secure and pacified provinces of the Fāṭimid state at the end of al-Ḥākim's reign than they had been at its beginning.

The other important bedouin rebellion that marked al-Ḥākim's reign was that of Abū Rakwa. It lasted from 17 Jumādā II, 395/April 1, 1005 until 3 Dhū al-Hijja, 396/August 31, 1006. In Yahyā's view the people of al-Fustāt and Cairo rather than supporting Abū Rakwa feared him despite his Sunni Islamic pretensions. In order to strengthen support among the population, al-Ḥākim did

moderate the provisions of some of the more irritating ordinances. The closest Abū Rakwa came to toppling the Fāṭimid state was a smashingly successful raid on Giza. However, his forces were so unfitted to tackle the conventional defences of the capital that they withdrew immediately after their victory to the Fayyūm. Only two weeks later the Fāṭimid general al-Fadl b. Ṣāliḥ caught Abū Rakwa at Ra's al-Birka and crushed the rebel army.⁵⁷

Yahyā b. Saʿīd does not picture Abū Rakwa's rebellion as imperiling the Fāṭimid government itself but merely as threatening its control of some of its territory.

Somewhat later he notes that one of the few Christian churches not destroyed in al-Ḥākim's reign was that of the monastery of al-Isqīt at Maryūt near Alexandria, which enjoyed the protection of the Banū Kilāb and of the Banū Qurra, the same tribe which had supported Abū Rakwa.⁵⁸

Al-Ḥākim, as did his predecessors, worked for the extension of Ismāʿīlīsm to the territories of Iraq and Iran and expected to enter Baghdad one day. On this topic Yahyā writes:

[Al-Ḥākim] drew most of the people of distant places to support him and follow him. He was recognized in the prayer in al-Kūfa and his propaganda reached the gate of Baghdad and into the city of al-Rayy. He sent many splendid articles to the governors and rebels in the districts of Iraq to win them to his side.⁵⁹

To illustrate this statement, Yahyā tells the story of a merchant from Iraq who had brought his merchandise all the

way from Baghdad, avoiding bedouin, robbers, and other dangers, only to have it seized in Cairo. He does not state of what the merchandise consisted, but probably it was some forbidden article. The merchant called on al-Ḥākim to compensate him for his lost goods, either immediately or later when he entered Baghdad. He was certain, the merchant said, that al-Ḥākim would eventually conquer Baghdad and the territory which he did not as yet control. Supposedly al-Ḥākim was so pleased with the merchant's words that he rewarded him with thousands of dinars.⁶⁰

In his treatment of al-Ḥākim, Yahyā often mentions two of al-Ḥākim's most remarked-upon qualities--his extraordinary caprice and his bloodthirstiness. To give all the instances that Yahyā mentions of al-Ḥākim suddenly changing his mind and, almost on the spot, adopting a new policy, would involve a lengthy and tedious digression. A few examples will prove equally illuminating.

In 395/1004-1005 al-Ḥākim founded the famous Shī^Cī library the dār al-^Cilm and endowed it liberally with books in every field of knowledge. He appointed a group of teachers to instruct the people, but, Yahyā says, "After a time he had some of [the teachers] executed, and the rest fled into hiding in fear of being killed."⁶¹

In the midst of the wave of church destructions al-Ḥākim appointed the Christian secretary Mansūr b. ^CAbdūn as his first minister, 18 ṣafar, 400/October 11,

1009. He was the same man who had steadfastly resisted al-Ḥākim's effort to forcibly convert the Christian bureaucrats to Islam the previous year. He remained in office approximately ten months before his dismissal, 4 Muḥarram, 401/August 18, 1010. Shortly thereafter he was executed. Aḥmad b. al-Qusūrī, who succeeded Mansūr b. Abdūn, lasted only nine days in office, before al-Ḥākim ordered him killed and replaced him with the Christian Zur^Ca b. ^CIsā b. al-Nastūras. Al-Qusūrī's tenure, however, was not the briefest among al-Ḥākim's vizirs. Al-Faḍl b. Ja^Cfar b. al-Furāt held the office only five days in Shawwāl, 405/April, 1015 before being executed.⁶² Another victim of al-Ḥākim's caprice was the eunuch ^CAyn, who had been the beneficiary of his special favor. Suddenly, al-Ḥākim ordered ^CAyn's right hand cut off. Then he returned ^CAyn to favor, giving him the titles qā'id al-quwwād (commander in chief) and ustādh al-ustādhīn (most honored of the officials) and promoting him above all the other leaders of the state. When al-Ḥākim's temper suffered another sudden change, ^CAyn's tongue was cut out. Perhaps, however, ^CAyn was fortunate for, as Yahyā observes, it was al-Ḥākim's custom to murder those he treated specially and with whom he associated.⁶³

Yahyā reveals his perception of al-Ḥākim as an extraordinarily changeable personality in recalling al-Ḥākim's order of Ṣafar, 402/September 3-October 1, 1011

that no cross might be exposed in public. Crosses were removed from churches, and care taken to render any trace of them invisible. When al-Ḥākim ordered the size of the cross which Christians wore increased to a royal cubit in length and width in Rabī^C II, 403/October-November, 1012, he effectively nullified the sense of his earlier decree. This nullification of one degree by another diametrically opposed to it Yahyā terms "one of the most astonishing wonders."⁶⁴

Although he felt that al-Ḥākim was extremely quick to cause bloodshed, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd does not belabor the point. The preceding discussion of his capricious behavior also gives examples of the Caliph's bloodlust. The accounts given by Yahyā of the flurries of killing in 395/1004-1005 and 400/1009-1010 indicate that while his murderous impulses were directed first of all at the leading people of the state, these were by no means his only victims. For instance, in the former year he had all the prisoners in jail killed. The damage and death in the burning of al-Fustāt, ordered by al-Ḥākim near the end of his reign, reputedly led the Slav eunuch ʿĀdī to report to him, "Even if the Emperor Basil had attacked al-Fustāt, he would not have permitted the like of this done."⁶⁵

On the other hand, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd states that al-Ḥākim enjoyed widespread support among the populations of Cairo and al-Fustāt, at least until near the end of his

reign. He says that al-Hākīm had the community (umma) solidly in his control and most members of it submitted easily to his intentions.⁶⁶ He explains al-Hākīm's success in gaining popular support in the following way: "[Al-Hākīm] won the people over to his side by [his] justice and the abolition of the excise taxes (mukūs) and the unjust taxes (rusūm) and by donations and gifts."⁶⁷ Elsewhere, Yahyā amplifies his remarks on the nature of justice under al-Hākīm's regime.

[Al-Hākīm] displayed justice whose parallel is unheard of. By my life [I swear] the people of his state were always secure in their personal property without being confident of their own lives. He never reached his hand out to take anyone's money. In fact, he was very generous and [made] many presents and abundant gifts.⁶⁸

Although al-Hākīm caused many of the incalculably rich to be put to death, Yahyā continues, he never took their wealth for himself, especially when there was a surviving heir. If there were no heir, al-Hākīm would often present the estate to whoever requested it. He was no less generous with his own properties so that at his death, Yahyā says, only a small part of these were still in his possession. Land which had been confiscated either in his own reign or that of his grandfather al-Mu^cizz was restored by his order to its previous owner, and creditors of the treasury were repaid, even when the owner had long since given up hope of ever recovering his money.⁶⁹

He repeatedly points out how al-Ḥākim made himself available to the common people. They could present their petitions directly to the Caliph, and he himself would make the decision whether or not to satisfy them. But, he cautions, only "People met him whose affairs forced them to it."⁷⁰

Yahyā is the only authority to mention al-Ḥākim's judicial reform which established that no one could be convicted of a crime without the testimony of at least two witnesses. Also, no one could legally conceal knowledge of a crime or accept money to influence his testimony.⁷¹

Two other benevolent acts which he calls attention to were the manumission of his ghilmān in Muharram, 404/ July-August, 1013 and the "charitable and kind" permission granted to the Christians to emigrate the following month.⁷²

He appears to have seen both a utilitarian purpose and a sincere idealism in al-Ḥākim's activities. What did al-Ḥākim gain, for instance, from allowing the Christians to emigrate? Yahyā also notes that he generously allowed the Christians to take what they could carry and to sell their other possessions.

Nevertheless, fear is the tendency in popular feeling toward al-Ḥākim which Yahyā most frequently mentions. This was the case both with Jews and Christians and with Muslims. For example, one night when he was passing a

shop where roast meat was served, al-Ḥākim grabbed a cleaver and struck down one of the suite of riders (rikābiyya) which accompanied him in his wanderings. After al-Ḥākim had continued on his way, no one dared to approach the body until the next morning when the Caliph sent a beautiful shroud and ordered the body cleaned up and buried.⁷³

Yahyā believes that there was fear of al-Ḥākim in everyone's soul because of the strength of his authority and his rash manner of killing for the smallest offense. One did not seek al-Ḥākim's aid except in circumstances of critical need and importance. He tells how one delegation petitioning al-Ḥākim fell to the ground when the Caliph approached them and were unable to answer him out of fear.⁷⁴

In such a climate it is not surprising that wild rumors circulated and were widely believed. Christians converted to Islam because of stories that the arms and legs of the recalcitrant would be cut off and their property and wives handed over to al-Ḥākim's black troops and officers.⁷⁵

In Rajab, 403/January-February, 1013 al-Ḥākim began manifesting an ascetic manner, Yahyā says. He donned black woolen garments and a black turban and let his hair grow long. In place of a horse he began riding a donkey accoutred with a common iron saddle and bridle. He forbade

his subjects to kiss the ground before him, to prostrate themselves, or to kiss his hand in deference. No longer was he to be saluted as mawlanā (our lord). It was in connection with this ascetic transformation that al-Ḥākim expelled the mothers of his children and his concubiness from the palace. In Rabi^c I, 404/September-October, 1013 he appointed ^cAbd al-Rahīm b. Ilyās as his successor (wālī ^cahd al-muslimīn). ^cAbd al-Rahīm assumed almost all the trappings of the Caliph and administrative functions, leaving al-Ḥākim to his spiritual pursuits. These actions enhanced his standing with the common people.⁷⁶

Yahyā has some reservations about the sincerity of al-Ḥākim's asceticism. The degrading assault which he reports on an old man by a member of al-Ḥākim's suite at his order and to his laughter and evident amusement "was incompatible with the asceticism he pretended," he felt.⁷⁷

Yahyā b. Sa^cīd is also an important authority on the early activities of the first leaders of the Druze sect. He begins his account of the origins of the Druze religion in 408/1017-1018 with the arrival in Egypt of the dā^ci Muhammad b. Ismā^cīl al-Darazī. Although he preached that al-Ḥākim was God the Creator, the Caliph never rejected al-Darazī's claims. In fact, Yahyā says that this doctrine was not far from what al-Ḥākim's predecessors, the Alid caliphs, had professed.⁷⁸ Al-Ḥākim decided to reveal what his forefathers had hidden in the

belief that he could gradually bring the people around to what he intended. It appears that al-Darazī's invitation to al-Ḥākim to accept divination fitted the Caliph's increasing inclination towards asceticism and piety. Al-Ḥākim thought that a genuine, doctrinal belief in his divinity existed in the popular mind, but, "In this," Yahyā says, "his desire got the best of his intelligence."⁷⁹

Al-Ḥākim instructed al-Darazī to summon the people to his doctrine (madhhab) by letter, and al-Darazī contacted the commander of the Turkish ghilmān, the dā^ci al-du^cāt Khatkīn (Khatigin?), and the wālī^c ahd al-muslimīn ^cAbd al-Rahīm b. Ilyās. When they angrily queried al-Ḥākim whether the letters were sent by his order, the Caliph repudiated al-Darazī's letters.⁸⁰

Yahyā says that in the same year as his arrival, 408/1017-1018, a Turkish ghulām murdered al-Darazī while he was riding in al-Ḥākim's retinue. Rioting then engulfed Cairo for three days, and a number of al-Darazī's followers were killed. Al-Darazī's murderer was also killed in retaliation.

Another dā^ci, Ḥamza b. Ahmad, known as al-Ḥādī (the Guide), appeared, according to Yahyā's account, to carry on the mission of al-Darazī.⁸¹ Ḥamza commissioned missionaries in Egypt and Syria. There was open antagonism between the followers of Ḥamza, representing a doctrinal

offshoot, and those of the dā^Ci al-du^Cāt, who was the leading figure of the Fāṭimid school of Ismā^Cīlism. Yahyā claims that the Druze showed the most manifest disrespect for the religion of Islam: they defiled mosques and Qur'āns, preached the abandonment of fasting and the pilgrimage, and cursed all the prophets from Adam and Noah to Muhammad and ^CAlī. They even advocated incest.⁸²

He believes that the Druze movement in reality enjoyed al-Ḥākim's covert but nevertheless firm support. He says Hamza informed the Caliph that he had sixteen thousand followers who accepted his divinity. This number, perhaps inflated, was a selling point in Hamza's attempt to convince him to give his undisguised support to the movement. This he would not do, but when seven of Hamza's followers were killed by a mob at the mosque of lower al-Fuṣṭāṭ after blaspheming God in the presence of the chief qādī, al-Ḥākim retaliated by having seventy members of the crowd executed. This is probably the same incident in which other authors state that the Druze partisans handed the chief qādī a petition which began with the words, "In the name of al-Ḥākim, the merciful, the benevolent."⁸³

In view of the lack of enthusiasm among the general population and high Ismā^Cīlī officials for the idea of al-Ḥākim's divinity, he could not publicly reveal his sincere feelings, but Yahyā has no doubt as to what these were:

Many were deceived by [al-Hākim] and turned to following him. They competed for his patronage and counted every wicked deed--murder, imbecility, and other reprehensible deeds besides them--which he committed in the midst of that as the most noble actions. They explained them through [various] kinds of interpretation (ta'wīl) and argued that everything which he did were hidden mysteries and had hidden purposes which are uncomprehended by humanity and that [humanity] has not attained to knowledge of their causes.⁸⁴

The preaching of his divinity pleased al-Hākim. It was among the humblest people (ra^ca^c) that it found the most favorable response, Yahyā says.⁸⁵ The Muslims believed that al-Hākim had ceased giving the customary prayers and the khutba on Fridays in Ramadān and had suspended the pilgrimage and the dispatch of a shroud (kiswa) for the Ka^cba, an annual responsibility of the ruler of Egypt, because he meant to spread his own doctrine, the effect of which would be to negate Islam.⁸⁶

In trying to impose belief in his own divinity on the Egyptian people al-Hākim lost their support and kindled opposition that could not be quelled through fear alone. Yahyā evidently shares the popular belief that al-Hākim was driving the people toward al-Darazī's doctrine.⁸⁷ In the last ten days of Ramadān, 410/January 20-29, 1020, he reports that al-Hākim resorted to publishing a public letter, urging his subjects to recognize him as God and threatening that their dwellings will be destroyed, their

property plundered, and their wives and children abducted, if they fail to obey.⁸⁸

Poems and qasīdas reviling al-Ḥākim circulated. When these came to the Caliph's attention, he ordered his black troops to burn and plunder al-Fustāt in Dhū al-Qa^cda, 410/February 28-March 28, 1020. The sack of al-Fustāt went on for three days before al-Ḥākim ordered the fires extinguished. Supposedly, a large area of al-Fustāt was destroyed.

Yahyā cites two motives which came to his ears for al-Ḥākim's actions. First, he wanted to fulfill his threat to burn al-Fustāt, as the hostile poems and qasīdas had claimed he would do. The second attributed the conflagration to al-Ḥākim's wrath at the sluggish popular response to his decree ordering the acceptance of the doctrine of al-Darazī and Ḥamza. Yahyā concludes that perhaps it was on account of both these circumstances that al-Ḥākim ordered al-Fustāt burned. Afterwards he says, the Caliph issued a decree expressing his sorrow at the misfortune that had befallen the inhabitants of al-Fustāt and claiming that it had not taken place by his order or choice.⁸⁹

Obviously, Yahyā puts no faith in al-Ḥākim's words. For instance, he cites al-Ḥākim's granting freedom of choice to Muslims in religious matters with the actual purpose of finding out who rejected the Ismā^cīlī doctrine.⁹⁰ When he identified those who were sincere Sunnis, he had them killed.

At approximately the same time al-Hākīm was issuing his bogus decree granting freedom of religion, he issued a certificate of amān to al-Husayn b. Jawhar, who feared for his life. Al-Husayn cautiously sent the certificate of amān to be hung on the Ka^cba itself where he hoped it would guarantee al-Hākīm's faithful compliance. Undaunted, al-Hākīm soon violated it and put al-Husayn to death.

Naturally, a widespread distrust of al-Hākīm developed. Many of the most distinguished Christian converts were reluctant to return to their own faith even when al-Hākīm gave permission for fear that he would go back on his word.

In Yahyā's mind al-Hākīm was a totally unreliable and devious figure, incapable of openly admitting his own goals and intentions. He could support the Druze with all the government's weight and then openly repudiate them. Likewise, he sacked part of his own capital city and denied that it was done by his order. Yahyā was no less convinced of al-Hākīm's hostility toward the Christians although he allowed them to emigrate to Byzantium.

As a conclusion to his account of al-Hākīm's extraordinary behavior and actions, Yahyā tries to find an explanation for them. It is revealing evidence of his professional allegiance that he attempted to make it in medical terms.⁹¹ Here is what he says:

[Al-Hākīm] grew his hair until it became long and fell on shoulders; he abstained from cutting it and manicuring his nails. He changed his white wool clothing which he wore for black and

his blue turban for black. He began to wear a single garment for so long a time that it would stick together from the sweat perpetually circulating in it and the dust continually upon it.

[Al-Hākīm] continually wandered about the desert and the wastes and went to the Jabal al-Muqattam to be alone by himself, leaving his mounted escort far behind him. He kept on going where he wished alone and returning to the place where his mounted escort awaited him. It is said that when he is all alone by himself in the Jabal

he would ask Allāh the Most Exalted to communicate with him and make revelations to him, even as he communicated with Moses and the rest of the Prophets and revealed [things] to them.

His condition became not far from that of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, of whom Daniel the true Prophet told that the deserts became a refuge for him as for the wild beasts. His nails grew and resembled the claws of the eagle, and his hair grew long as the lion's in punishment for his destruction of the Temple of the Lord in Jerusalem and his spoliation of the people of Jerusalem and his driving them away into exile.

The cause of his injustice in all the strange, contradictory deeds which he had in mind, which rose out of his soul, and which he perpetrated time after time was in fact--although it is a digression from our history relating to him--a kind of pernicious ill humor in his brain which since his youth had caused a type of mālinkhūliyā and a deterioration of the cogitative [faculties] to afflict him. It is generally known in the medical profession that delusions appear in whomsoever this disease afflicts and he imagines matters and marvels. None of them has any doubt that he is in the right in all actions he conceives, and no one who is opposed can dissuade him or prevail upon him to not do them. Among them are those who believe themselves [each] a prophet and imagine that [each] himself is God the Exalted Himself. Frequently their condition becomes clear from the confusion and disconnectedness of their speech by which their condition is revealed to whomever sees and converses with them. Any doubt of it is dispelled at first sight. Sometimes in the case of one of them his confusion in speech is unnoticeable. These fantasies and evil notions occur to him in matters hidden from the common people, and among them his image is that of the

wise. Their opinion of him is good, and they consider him with the best people. If their acquaintance is extended, what was hidden from them refutes [their earlier opinion].

This is the picture of al-Hākim's condition. His deficiency became clear to anyone who accompanied him for long. As to whoever was distant from him, only his actions could make [his condition] evident to him. The true nature of this disease which overcame him is shown by convulsions from the dry ill humor in his brain, which had beset him in his youth. It is a pernicious humor which occurs in the varieties of mālinkhūliyā. To cure him of it he needed--along with other treatments--to sit and soak in syrup of violet. His insomnia and his passion for riding continually and [his] lasting anxiety are among the things which this disease causes.⁹²

This analysis of al-Hākim's condition is basically two things. First, it is a picture of the exotic nature of his condition. As there is no other figure in all Islamic history to whom he can be compared, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd goes back to Nebuchadnezzar to find a similar case. Second, it is a discussion of the cause of al-Hākim's strange behavior. He locates it in an ill humor which beset the Caliph in his youth and caused him to suffer convulsions.

He lists the symptoms which the victims of the disease display and describes al-Hākim's condition. It is normal for its victims to suffer delusions and to see themselves in a prophetic or even messianic role. Generally, their speech is garbled and confused, but it appears that al-Hākim did not suffer from this problem. As to how al-Hākim's disease-related behavior affected him, Yahyā says that it was only in matters the common people do not understand. For this reason, they hold him

in respect. Here he openly admits that al-Ḥākim enjoyed popular support among the masses of his subjects.

The only way one could diagnose his real medical condition was through observing him over a period of time. Yahyā claims to have had, either himself or through an eyewitness informant, the benefit of continuous observation of al-Ḥākim. It is on this important distinction-- that his judgements are not casual and quickly reached-- that he rests the reliability of his diagnosis. V. R. Rozen believed that his detailed knowledge of al-Ḥākim's medical condition came to Yahyā by way of the Caliph's personal physician, Abū Ya^Cqūb b. Anastās. The basis of Rozen's suggestion is the story Yahyā tells (twice) of how Abū Ya^Cqūb brought about an improvement in al-Ḥākim's condition by convincing him to drink wine and, presumably, to relax. Rozen noticed that Yahyā suffixed the formula "May God bless him" after Abū Ya^Cqūb's name when relating his death. This is the only instance of its use in the entire chronicle. In this seems to lie a sign that a special relationship existed between Abū Ya^Cqūb and Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd.⁹³ Rozen's conclusion, although not more than hypothesis, is logical and has much to recommend it.

Yahyā's sketch of al-Ḥākim is more able and comprehensive than that of any other, but the idea that al-Ḥākim suffered from insanity became widely diffused in medieval Arabic chronography. Before long this conclusion became part of the general al-Ḥākim legend.

Thus, to summarize his opinions, Yahyā b. Sa^cīd believed that although some commendable innovations and reforms marked the caliphate of al-Hākīm, its major characteristic was oppression which reached the point of causing widespread mental anguish due to his acute fickleness and readiness to order executions. The Caliph acted in a far from rational manner and, in fact, was the victim of a mālinkūliyā which produced an effect upon him tantamount to insanity.

Examination of Apologetic Views of al-Hākīm

Some recent apologetic treatments of al-Hākīm, which attempt to rehabilitate his reputation, reject Yahyā's interpretation of his reign. Professor P. J. Vatikiotis is the author of the most extreme modern attempt to reconsider al-Hākīm's historical reputation. Our discussion of the apologetic-revisionist viewpoint will be directed principally to Vatikiotis' short study devoted to al-Hākīm⁹⁴ and some remarks of the Druze scholar Dr. Samī N. Makarem. Thereafter, we will deal very briefly with the views of other scholars who hold opinions similar to those of Vatikiotis and Makarem but who have elucidated them even less fully.

Vatikiotis' thesis is that during al-Hākīm's reign a crisis of external and internal dimensions endangered the sectarian organization of the Fātimid state and even its actual existence. For this reason al-Hākīm's policy had two objectives: "To satisfy, at least temporarily, the demands of popular mass expectations of a mahdī,"

which required that the religious opposition to the imam-caliph be overcome and "To pressure a dangerous foreign foe (the Byzantines) to terms."⁹⁵

In order to forestall rebellion, originating in these popular expectations, al-Hākim propagated the idea that "God could manifest himself in mortals." Vatikiotis writes,

Al-Hākim attempted to absorb the problems facing an Ismā^Cīlī crisis--regardless of unfavorable consequences to Christians and Sunnī Muslims...Rather, sensitivity to delicate problems of state distinguished al-Hākim from his predecessor, al-^CAzīz.... Al-Hākim, in our view, was engaged in a deadly struggle of retaining the Fatimid sectarian basis of the State.⁹⁶

Vatikiotis cites the teachings of ^CAbdallāh b. Ismā^Cīl and Abū ^CAbdallāh al-Shī^Cī that there were to be seven imams after Muḥammad b. Ismā^Cīl, meaning that the final imam would be al-Mu^Cizz. According to this thesis, al-^CAzīz had been thrust into the role of a savior-mahdī, which he failed to acknowledge.⁹⁷

In Vatikiotis' view the coming of a mahdī would in some way strengthen the Fātimid state vis-à-vis its external enemies: the Byzantines, Abū Rakwa, and the ^CAbbāsīd caliphs and Būyīd rulers of Baghdad. Vatikiotis denies that a treaty was signed with Constantinople in 390/1000; rather, peace was made in A.D. 1023.⁹⁸ The revolt in the Maghrib was an even greater danger than the Byzantines. Baghdad was a third area of hostility. By

400/1009-1010, Baghdad was "vigorously hostile" to the Fāṭimids, Vatikiotis says. "In A.H. 402 [1011-1012] the Baghdad Manifesto was issued denouncing the genealogy of the Fatimid caliphs. The importance of this Manifesto lies in its psychological warfare value at a time of Fatimid crisis."⁹⁹

There were further, internal sources of opposition to al-Ḥākim: the Kutāma Berbers, al-Ḥākim's Christian mother, and his sister Sitt al-Mulk. "The Kutāma group, led by Ibn ^CAmmār, seemed to favour a more secular trend with the hope of building an empire through conquest."¹⁰⁰ Female intrigue against al-Ḥākim prompted his ordinances restricting them, 396-399/1005-1009.¹⁰¹

Vatikiotis justifies al-Ḥākim's legislation and persecution of the Jews and Christians by (a) the desire of the Muslim community for a harsh program against the religious minorities; (b) the weakening of the Fāṭimid claims to achievement of a universal da^Cwa imposed by a policy of toleration; (c) the possibility of influencing Byzantine policy vis-à-vis the Fāṭimids.¹⁰²

Vatikiotis proposed the existence of an economic crisis in 390-396/999-1006, accompanied by a deterioration in public morals, as a rationalization for al-Ḥākim's severity. In his vindication, Vatikiotis cites his generosity to charity and university endowments, his leniency in regard to taxation, and his attempts to root

out corruption as indicative of his interest in good government.

Makarem's remarks are similar to Vatikiotis'. He points to the hostility of Egypt's neighbors, which was nourished by subversive intrigues on the part of Egypt's non-Ismā^Cīlī population, and the deteriorating economic situation in Egypt. In respect to these conditions and the belief that al-Ḥākim's legislation can be interpreted in economic, moral, and sanitary terms, Makarem's conception of al-Ḥākim's reign hardly differs from that of Vatikiotis.

Where Makarem goes beyond Vatikiotis is in explaining the role of Ismā^Cīlī doctrine as a factor in al-Ḥākim's behavior. Makarem believes that al-Ḥākim openly proclaimed himself to be God's will manifested (al-nāsūt) as the ninth Fātimid imam. Only with the ninth imam would the new era begin, not after the seventh as Vatikiotis stated. "As the child is born in the ninth month, so the da^Cwa is accomplished by the ninth Imam."¹⁰³

When the da^Cwa was completed, its need for an imam at its head as a legislator disappeared. Makarem contends that neither al-Ḥākim's heirs nor the Ismā^Cīlīs were prepared to have the da^Cwa terminated and the place of the imam abolished.

Makarem explains al-Ḥākim's appointment of two heirs as a consequence of the termination of the imamate.

The first, ^CAbd al-Rahīm b. Ilyās, a great grandson of ^CUbaydallāh al-Mahdī, whom Makarem says was a mustawda^C imam (not a true imam but only a trustee of the imamate) was titled wālī ^Cahd al-muslimīn, the political successor. The other heir, Abū Hishām ^CAbbās b. Shu^Cayb (as the Druze scriptures give his name) was wālī ^Cahd al-mu^Cminīn or the religious successor. Although the imamate customarily passed from father to son, al-Ḥākim did not appoint his son as his successor. This reveals his conviction that he was the final Imam.

Makarem considers that al-Ḥākim was only carrying the Ismā^Cīlī creed to its logical conclusion. Otherwise, his summation of al-Ḥākim's reign is almost identical to Vatikiotis'. "Al-Ḥākim's zealotry and his rule over a population predominantly hostile to Ismā^Cīlism in a period of political unrest and economic depression made his subjects live under a severe martial law that he considered imperative in such conditions, especially when the Ismā^Cīlī movement was starting a new phase."¹⁰⁴

In sum, Vatikiotis, joined by Makarem, exonerates al-Ḥākim by invoking a picture of the Fāṭimid state on the verge of liquidation at the hands of its external and internal enemies. This interpretation might explain al-Ḥākim's perplexing behavior if the relevant evidence upon examination is found to corroborate Vatikiotis and Makarem's hypotheses or to show up bias in the chroniclers' accounts.

Vatikiotis' thesis revolves, first of all, on an analysis of Fāṭimid foreign policy. An important thread of his argument is that there was a deep hostility between the Fāṭimids and the Byzantines in this period, but, according to Yahyā b. Sa^cīd, a treaty introducing peace was signed by Constantinople and Cairo in or soon after A.D. 1000.¹⁰⁵ Vatikiotis advances no reason for doubting Yahyā's information, which is confirmed by his contemporary Hilāl al-Ṣābī, who also took note of this same treaty.¹⁰⁶ While al-Maqrīzī ignores the signature of the treaty itself, he mentions diplomatic contacts unprecedented in frequency over the next fifteen years. The Emperor Basil II subsequently refrained from involving himself openly in Syrian affairs although he quietly tried to maintain Aleppo as a buffer between the Fāṭimids in south and central Syria and the Byzantines in Antioch and the coastal mountains.

The revolt of Abū Rakwa, whom Vatikiotis represents as posing an even greater threat to Fāṭimid Egypt than did the Byzantines, lasted only two years from Abū Rakwa's proclamation as the Imam until his execution outside Cairo. Although Abū Rakwa inspired fear in the hearts of al-Ḥākim's subjects, his irregular forces lacked the strength to challenge the organized military capacity and resources of the Fāṭimid state in the heart of Egypt and to threaten Cairo itself. In a situation demanding

political treatment, al-Ḥākim moderated the harshness of some morality and dietary laws affecting the average citizen. Thus, contrary to Vatikiotis and Makarem's thesis, rather than tightening his authoritarian hold as a result of external threat, al-Ḥākim relaxed it. It should be noted that Abū Rakwa had no support from a foreign power such as the Umayyads of Spain. His movement was an internal revolt based on his own charisma and ability to unite Arabs and Berbers formerly antagonistic to each other under his own zealously Sunnite Muslim leadership.

The third quarter from which Vatikiotis sees Egypt threatened was Baghdad under the spiritual inspiration of the ʿAbbāsīd caliphs and the political domination of the Būyids. Any invasion of Egypt from Iraq would have had to come by way of Mosul, the Jazīra, Aleppo, and Syria. Yet, during the reign of al-Ḥākim towns as close to Baghdad as Kūfa, al-Anbār, and al-Madāʿīn, not to mention Mosul, were under the control of the ʿUqaylid amir Qirwāsh b. al-Muqallad. This means that the Būyids effectively controlled almost no territory west or north of Baghdad. The Būyid ruler Bahā' al-Dawla had withdrawn his residence from Baghdad to Shīrāz and was represented in Baghdad by a governor, ʿAmīd al-Juyūsh. Qirwāsh b. al-Muqallad ordered that the khutba be given in the name of al-Ḥākim in Mosul and all his territories, some of which

were within thirty kilometres of Baghdad, 4 Muharram, 401/August 13, 1010.¹⁰⁷ Although ^CAmīd al-Juyūsh rapidly suppressed this experiment, it was to Qirwāsh b. al-Muqallad's short-lived flaunting of al-Hākim's name in the khutba that Yahyā referred when he claimed that al-Hākim was invoked in the prayer in Kūfa and that his propaganda reached the gate of Baghdad itself.¹⁰⁸

The so-called Baghdad Manifesto, the publication of which in Rabī^C II, 402/November, 1011 was instigated by the ^CAbbāsīd caliph al-Qādir, asserted the falseness of the Fāṭimid genealogy in retaliation to and defense against the preaching of the Fāṭimid da^Cwa in Iraq and Iran.¹⁰⁹ The Manifesto had a general application, both against the Fāṭimid Caliphate but also in Iraq and Iran, which al-Hākim tried to subvert, dispatching missionaries and cash payoffs to achieve this purpose. Maḥmūd of Ghazna was among those he tried to win over besides Qirwāsh b. al-Muqallad. It is symptomatic of the Būyid state's weakness and total inability to threaten Egypt militarily that the Būyids could resort only to "psychological warfare" against Cairo rather than actual military operations.

Therefore, the available evidence demonstrates that vis-à-vis Byzantium, the Maghrib and Spain (as represented by Abū Rakwa), and the Būyid state in Iraq, the Fāṭimid caliphate in the time of al-Hākim was completely secure in its Egyptian lands and that no external crisis confronted Cairo.

Turning to the question of an internal crisis, there are three aspects to be dealt with: economic crisis, political crisis, and religious and spiritual crisis.

Prosperity, not crisis, meets the eye in the economic arena. Egypt was the richest country of the Muslim East in the first seventy years of the eleventh century, a fact in no way diminished by al-Ḥākim's activities.¹¹⁰ Al-Ḥākim's abolition of customs taxes (mukūs) and other illegal taxes (rusūm) probably had a stimulative effect on Egypt's international trade position, which was greatly enhanced circa A.D. 1000 by the shift in the Indian trade from the Persian Gulf and Baghdad to the Red Sea and Cairo.¹¹¹

The value of the Egyptian dīnār, a good indicator of the strength of the economy, increased in al-Ḥākim's reign to 4,188 s.g. from 4,128 s.g. in al-ʿAzīz's time.¹¹² The value of the silver currency, the dirham, was not equally stable, dropping considerably during his reign. However, silver is not an indicator of equal significance with gold since the value of the silver currency was determined in reference to the gold currency.¹¹³ Nevertheless, abrupt fluctuations in the value of the dirham would have the effect of inflicting hardship upon the common man. Just such a period of violent fluctuation took place in the period 395-397/1005-1007, in which the

dirham-dīnār exchange rate dropped from 26:1 to 34:1. In response to this change and presumably because of the severe effect it had on the lower classes, al-Ḥākim carried out a stabilization of the dirham, recalling old dirhams and issuing new ones in their place at the rate of 18:1 in Rabī^c I, 397/December, 1006-January 22, 1007.¹¹⁴

Concurrently, there was a period of famine resulting from low Nile floods. Yahyā first mentions the onset of hard times in 397/1006-1007, but al-Maqrīzī's Treatise on Famines indicates that the crisis began at least two years earlier, in 395/1004-1005. In 399/1008-1009 al-Ḥākim successfully attempted to alleviate the plight of the common people by threatening to search houses and to punish hoarders and profiteers with the most severe penalties. In the last three years of the famine, 397-399/1006-1009, the crisis assumed catastrophic proportions.¹¹⁵

The examination of this period of economic crisis is particularly revealing in connection with Vatikiotis' assertion of latent disloyalty and rebelliousness in the Egyptian population. To the contrary, in a period of severe economic crisis and famine, juxtaposed with a powerful Bedouin rebellion against the regime, the great bulk of the people of Egypt, in particular the populations of Cairo and al-Fustāṭ, stood loyally by their ruler, untainted by any trace of sedition. The conclusion to be

drawn from all this is that, in reality, al-Hākīm enjoyed considerable popular support in the early part of his career.

The method by which al-Hākīm undertook to solve the problem of grain hoarding in 399/1008-1009 illustrates his hold over his people. Before a crowd of petitioners he personally warned that those found guilty of hoarding would be decapitated, their residences burned, and their fortunes confiscated. His threat brought about the opening of large hidden grain stores and temporarily solved the problem of inadequate supplies.¹¹⁶ This incident shows al-Hākīm as the ultimate hope of the oppressed and the dreaded weigher of justice. His grim threat could not be ignored, yet it was motivated primarily by the interests of his poorest subjects.

None of al-Hākīm's legislation of an anti-Christian, anti-Sunni or moralistic nature seems definitely explicable in terms of actual Egyptian conditions and needs. For example, during the rebellion of Abū Rakwa, al-Hākīm moderated some of his harsh measures, but the step revoking and prohibiting insults against Sunni cult figures was not taken until 9 Rabī^c II 397/January 2, 1007.¹¹⁷ That was not until after the danger from Abū Rakwa had passed. Thus, the political benefit in consolidating Sunni support for the regime in the face of a Sunni rebellion was lost.

Probably the origins of al-Hākīm's religious and morality legislation lay rather in the evolution of his own personal psychology. Possibly some connection could be drawn between the intensification of anti-Jewish and anti-Christian measures, which were supposedly popular with the Muslim masses, and the hard times the population of Egypt endured in the final two years of famine. At any rate, the evidence is overwhelming that al-Hākīm had nothing to fear from the population, among whom he could roam at will, that is, until he revealed his claim to be God's will manifested.

Were the Egyptian Jewish and Christian minorities any less loyal to al-Hākīm than his Muslim subjects? Evidence for concluding that subversion and intrigue on the part of the religious minorities threaten the actual position of al-Hākīm is completely lacking. Instead, the situation of the Jews and Christians in the reigns of his predecessors appears to have been as favorable as at any time since the Arab conquest. Jews and Christians served faithfully in responsible positions without mishap or treason. The Fātimids, in general, relied to a degree unsurpassed among Muslim dynasties on Jewish and Christian subordinates, whom they found more loyal to the dynasty than Muslims. For instance, it was a Coptic scribe who wrote the order for the destruction of the Church of the Resurrection. By giving the Jews and Christians

unprecedented freedom, the Fāṭimids obtained their active sympathy and materially contributed to the flourishing position Egypt assumed in international trade.¹¹⁸ The relatively good treatment the religious minorities received from al-Mu^Cizz and al-^CAzīz almost certainly had the effect of exacerbating prejudice among the Muslim masses.

Makarem is mistaken when he looks for the cause of al-Ḥākim's persecution of Jews and Christians in their disloyal behavior, convenient as this excuse may be. Regardless of whether it was Ismā^Cīlī idealism or purely utilitarian desire to turn the situation to his profit which actually motivated al-Ḥākim, in the religious minorities he found a target of public hostility which he could exploit to enhance the identification of him in the minds of his subjects with their interests.

To how great a degree Vatikiotis also has misunderstood the religious situation in al-Ḥākim's reign is shown by the complete failure of the Druze movement in Egypt and al-Ḥākim's forfeiture of his mass popularity as a result of his self proclamation as "God's will manifested." Vatikiotis' pretense that mass expectations of a mahdī necessitated the proclamation of al-Ḥākim's divinity is belied by his own rationalization of the Druze movement's failure in Egypt: "It appears that the Fāṭimid state proper in Egypt, under al-Ḥākim, could not

afford to advance such radical ideas."¹¹⁹ Yet, it was supposedly in response to popular demands of overwhelming urgency, verging on revolution, that al-Ḥākim proclaimed himself the Mahdī.

The call for the final imam, the Qā'im, did not represent a new development in al-Ḥākim's time. The Qādī al-Nu^cmān (d. 363/974) had refuted similar radical demands when they had previously circulated in the time of al-Mu^cizz.¹²⁰ Rather in the personality of al-Ḥākim the blandishments of al-Darazī and Hamza, who were rejected by Establishment Ismā^cīlīs like the dā^ci al-du^cāt Khatkīn, found fertile soil.

Vatikiotis and Makarem both suggest explanations, following Ismā^cīlī esoteric theology, as to why al-Ḥākim should have been considered in his own time the Mahdī or Qā'im. As pointed out above, their explanations differ. Alternative theories, explaining how the appearance of the final imam will be determined, abound. Most of these theories conflict fundamentally with the schemes expressed by Vatikiotis and Makarem. Al-Ḥākim's divinity was by no means universally accepted in his own time by Ismā^cīlī initiates.

One such contradictory view appears in a letter, written in Jumādā II, 408/November, 1017, from the important Fātimid dā^ci, Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī to one of the leading advocates of al-Ḥākim's divinity. Al-Kirmānī

says that al-Ḥākim will not be the last imam, but after him will come a twenty-first, a twenty-fifth, a twenty-eighth, a thirty-eighth, a fifty-ninth, even a one hundredth imam.¹²¹

Al-Ḥākim's caution in revealing his claim to divinity betrays how insecurely his pretensions were founded in Ismā'īlī doctrine. As al-Ḥākim's claim was not undeniable, at some point he must have faced a decision concerning what course to follow in respect to it. Rather than making an open proclamation, he gave the leading Druze figures covert support and ceased performing the traditional religious duties of the Fātimid caliph.

In retrospect, it is clear that al-Ḥākim made a fatal decision. Despite the benefit of a notorious intelligence service, the mass support al-Ḥākim was expecting from his people was not forthcoming. In reaching his decision, as Yahyā says, "His desire won out over his intelligence."¹²² His misjudgment of the popular will led eventually to al-Ḥākim's rejection by his people and perhaps to his murder.

It seems accurate to conclude, having considered the issue from all sides, that no internal crisis of a political, economic, or religious variety or external crisis, such as Vatikiotis and Makarem perceive, threatened the Fātimid state's existence or was present in any identifiable form. Indeed, the Fātimid state was at a highpoint of prosperity and security.

Several other scholars besides Vatikiotis and Makarem have proposed modification of the conception of al-Ḥākim as a whimsical, often vicious, tyrant. The late Marshall Hodgson professed to see al-Ḥākim as "an effective ruler" who "wished, above all, to be the perfect ruler; widely generous, enforcing strict good order, and absolutely just to all the people." Although Hodgson admits that al-Ḥākim was afflicted by "bizarre moods and fits of cruelty," he proposed that "even the most bizarre of his whims seems to have been touched with a serious religious purpose."¹²³

The well-known nineteenth century scholars Dozy and Müller saw strains of idealism in al-Ḥākim's behavior, but both stopped short of wholeheartedly rejecting al-Ḥākim's fearful reputation. In the end, they could not ignore the schizophrenic character of his actions and the difficulty of reconciling these with his idealistic measures.¹²⁴ Similarly, Vladimir Ivanow, the famous student of Ismāʿīlīsm, clung indecisively to a split verdict on al-Ḥākim.¹²⁵

Prejudice in the Chronicles: A Quick Review

Having dismissed the existence of a major crisis either from within or from abroad during al-Ḥākim's reign, we must now consider what truth there is to the proposition that the chroniclers were prevented by their own prejudice from accurately recording the events of

al-Hākim's reign. Hodgson, Dozy, and Müller as well as Vatikiotis and Makarem hold that the view the chroniclers present is distorted radically by bias. Otherwise, these scholars could hardly reject so easily and completely the information of the chronicles. Prejudice, of course, applies only to an opinion reached a priori without attention to the actual conditions or particularities of the given problem or situation. In this case the root of the chroniclers' prejudice is supposedly their religious identification as Sunni Muslims or Christians, which prevented them from acknowledging the religious motivation of al-Hākim's actions.

The contemporary reports on al-Hākim's caliphate are four. Two are Christian: the Coptic History of the Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church and Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's "Continuation." The other two are Muslim: Hilāl al-Sābī's history, which is extant only in a fragment covering a three year period, but the substance of which has been copied down by numerous later chroniclers, and al-Musabbihī's Kitāb Akhbār Miṣr, which survives in al-Maqrīzī's writings.

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd was, of course, an Orthodox Christian who left Egypt because of the difficult life Christians faced there under al-Hākim's rule. Yet, it cannot be fairly said that Yahyā's picture of al-Hākim's reign is unbalanced.

He carefully distinguishes the affairs of the religious minorities from those of the bulk of the population. Indubitably, the Jews and Christians had a harder lot than their Muslim compatriots.

Yahyā openly admits al-Ḥākim's popularity with the people. This statement, which would be unwise if he were slanting his account against al-Ḥākim, he explains by references to al-Ḥākim's sense of justice, to his adherence to only legal forms of taxation, to his generosity and ascetic demeanor as well as the common appreciation of him as knowledgeable in matters in which the people themselves realized their ignorance.

Beyond these points Yahyā does not have much favorable to say about al-Ḥākim, but from this it cannot automatically be concluded that he is intentionally suppressing information which would enhance al-Ḥākim's historical image. The tone of Yahyā's account is moderate and sober. It is a basically factual account, distinguished by the nearly total absence of any questionable anecdotal material. One of its most encouraging qualities is that it is based on an appreciation of sound chronology.

Yahyā's description of al-Ḥākim's reign can be divided at A.H. 403/1012-1013 into two periods. The information for the first period is arranged annalistically as is normally the case in his chronicle and is primarily narrative and descriptive. For the second period the

annalistic arrangement is combined with a topical pattern of organization so that some of the stories related originally under the year in which they took place are retold later in relation to a particular subject. Thus, when Yahyā comes to explaining the medical origins of al-Ḥākim's problems he repeats the story of how Abū Ishāq b. Anastās brought about an improvement in al-Ḥākim's health.

The most plausible method of explaining this change in style is to associate it with Yahyā's emigration from Egypt. It is hard to say whether this actually freed Yahyā physically to write what he wished without fear of reprisal or allowed him to take a more reflective view once removed from a calamitous and depressing environment.

In fact, Yahyā's chapter on al-Ḥākim is the most solid historical writing to be found in his chronicle. It is colorful, detailed, and looks beyond events to their causes. In the second half of the section devoted to al-Ḥākim, he has sought explanations for the strange events of the reign. To this end he consistently cites examples as evidence for his conclusion. Often the examples are taken from the first, essentially narrative, half of the chapter.

Yahyā does not always represent a solely Christian viewpoint. When telling how al-Ḥākim became derelict in fulfilling his religious duties, he says that it was the

opinion of the Muslims that this was because of his turning away from the faith of Islam and his desire to strengthen his own doctrine.¹²⁶

Yahyā does not accept the religious explanation of al-Hākīm's actions and reforms. However, he was not unaware of this rationalization. According to him, the Druze tried to explain al-Hākīm's cruel or perverse actions as emanations of the allegorical interpretation of the divine Message (ta'wīl) which is a basic element in Ismā^Cīlī doctrine. His acts were represented as hidden mysteries.¹²⁷ He rejects this idea which he found insufficient to explain what he had lived through. Yahyā shows himself to be informed on Ismā^Cīlī doctrine and to have some grasp of how the Druze departed from it. In addition, various authors, including Hodgson, have found him an important authority on the origins of the Druze sect.¹²⁸ The open revolt by the population of al-Fustāt in Dhū al-Qa^Cda, 410/February 28-March 28, 1020 shows that a large segment of his subjects agreed with Yahyā in refusing to accept al-Hākīm's claims to supernatural knowledge in the face of his tyrannical vacillation and cruel authoritarianism.

Yahyā's image of al-Hākīm finds full confirmation in the chronicle of al-Musabbihī as preserved by al-Maqrīzī. Both writers have reputations as authoritative sources. Al-Musabbihī's information cannot be dismissed

on the basis of his religious affiliation which is unknown. However, al-Musabbihī's family had come to Egypt from Harrān, the center of the Sabaeen sect to which Thābit b. Sinān, Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm al-Ṣābī, and Hilāl al-Ṣābī all belonged.¹²⁹ While the latter three writers assimilated the dominant Sunni outlook at Baghdad, there is no reason to believe that al-Musabbihī, if in fact he was a Sabaeen, did not adopt the Ismā'īlī world view of the Fātimids. Al-Musabbihī became the head of the bureau of salaries (diwān al-tartīb) in 398/1007-1008.¹³⁰ This, it will be remembered, was the same year in which Christian bureaucrats were tortured and put under great pressure to convert to Islam or retired and formerly dismissed Muslim secretaries were registered and recalled to replace Christians. Al-Musabbihī also came in personal contact with al-Hākim.¹³¹ Some direct quotations from conversations between the two exist. Thus, al-Musabbihī in his personal career probably benefitted substantially from al-Hākim's anti-Christianity. The references to al-Hākim in the preserved volume of al-Musabbihī's Kitāb Akhbār Miṣr are not demonstrably prejudicial to al-Hākim. Several times al-Musabbihī places the reverent formula "May God sanctify his soul" (qaddasa Illāh rūhahu) after al-Hākim's name.

As is well-known, al-Maqrīzī, the transmitter of al-Musabbihī's information, was generally sympathetic to

the Fāṭimid dynasty. He recognized the anti-Fāṭimid bias of the Syrian and Iraqi chronicles and was not averse to relying on Ismāʿīlī writers where it served his purpose. Al-Maqrīzī's chief identification was with his native Egypt, in the history of which the Fāṭimids fill one of most glorious chapters.¹³² Of course, it is possible that he has altered al-Musabbiḥī's picture to better fit the conception of al-Ḥākim which was prevalent in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Such alteration, if al-Maqrīzī did attempt to doctor what al-Musabbiḥī wrote, would have involved the suppression of facts favorable to al-Ḥākim, but not the addition of statements slandering al-Ḥākim. The possibility that al-Maqrīzī attempted to alter the tone of so influential and authoritative an account as that of al-Musabbiḥī seems limited but cannot be excluded.

In any case, the confirmation that Yaḥyā finds in the remnants of al-Musabbiḥī's great history preserved by al-Maqrīzī is the most valuable testimony to the essential accuracy of Yaḥyā's statements. His account, as rendered by al-Maqrīzī is factual, never becoming judgmental as does Yaḥyā, but it embodies the same impression of al-Ḥākim's reign as an abnormal phenomenon.

Unfortunately, it cannot be inferred that al-Maqrīzī drew on al-Musabbiḥī for the years after 405/1014-1015. This means that there is no reliable contemporary chronicle source to validate Yaḥyā's story of the

first appearance of the Druze sect. Ibn Zāfir's account may possibly be based on original documents, as D. Bryer suggests, but there is no concrete evidence for this proposal.¹³³

The history of the first appearance of the Druze in Egypt is a subject of the greatest obscurity and confusion in the various chronicles. The general agreement on chronology and basic developments which characterizes the sources prior to 406/1015-1016 completely disappears after that date. As for Yahyā, he was living at Antioch after A.D. 1015. There he must have been dependent on informants for his knowledge of Egyptian affairs. Accurate information on so exotic and radical a sect as the Druze would be difficult to come by. Their own secretiveness contributed to misunderstandings. Yahyā's description of Druze activities is marred by several dubious statements and in particular by the attribution of such social practices as sexual license and incest to the Druze. It seems impossible that a group taking its authority from the puritanical al-Hākim would establish such loose rules for itself.¹³⁴

The section of the Coptic History of the Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church on al-Hākim's reign was written in A.D. 1051 by Michael, Bishop of Tinnīs, who was the continuator of Sāwīrus b. al-Muqaffa^C. He is a contemporary writer who echoes much that is said by Yahyā b. Sa^Cid or

al-Musabbihī but also includes a great deal of suspicious anecdotal material in his history of al-Ḥākim's rule. By itself the History of the Patriarchs is not a reliable source, but it can be used profitably in correlation with other sources.¹³⁵

Hilāl al-Ṣābī, who was a contemporary of the events he describes, reflects the characteristically Sunni world view of Baghdad. His name was respected as highly prestigious by chroniclers in later centuries, and his unfavorable judgments of al-Ḥākim became widely diffused in the works of subsequent writers. Ibn al-Athīr, Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī, and Ibn al-Qalānisi all relied on Hilāl al-Ṣābī for their information on al-Ḥākim, and Ibn Zāfir and Ibn Khallikān were at least partly dependent on him. Hilāl al-Ṣābī tended to attribute the most extensive powers of control and influence to al-Ḥākim. For instance, he explains the successful revolt of Fath, a ghulām in command of the citadel at Aleppo, against his master Mansūr b. Lu^Clu^C in 406/1015-1016 as the result of intrigues by al-Ḥākim. However, none of the North Syrian chroniclers, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd, Ibn al-^CAdīm, or al-^CAzīmī credit al-Ḥākim with such a role.¹³⁶ Moreover, Hilāl willingly accepted the most unflattering stories of al-Ḥākim's personal behavior. Thus, he states that al-Ḥākim was preparing to flee from Egypt during the revolt of Abū Rakwa while his subjects eagerly summoned Abū Rakwa to

Cairo.¹³⁷ This is only one exaggeration among many in what Hilāl says of al-Ḥākim. He pretends to fuller knowledge of internal Egyptian affairs than the contemporary Egyptians Yahyā b. Saʿīd and al-Musabbihī show. The product, originating from his Baghdad view of Egyptian affairs and an overly credulous approach, is a demoniacal image of al-Ḥākim without any subtler shading. It was this picture which came to dominate late medieval Arabic chronography; to this extent the charges of prejudice leveled against the chroniclers are justified. With the publication of Yahyā b. Saʿīd's "Continuation" in 1909 and now of al-Maqrīzī's Ittiʿāz al-Hunafā', it seems impossible to sustain these criticisms further.

There is, however, a core of truth to Hilāl al-Ṣabī's account. It is highly likely that he drew on some eyewitness Egyptian source. The chronology and description he gives is similar in many ways to those of Yahyā and al-Maqrīzī.

As we have seen, Yahyā took a broad view of Egyptian society; he does not present only a narrow Melkite Christian viewpoint. Al-Musabbihī may have been an Ismāʿīlī and in any case probably had abundant personal reasons for seeing al-Ḥākim in a favorable light. It is worthy of mention that modern scholars from Dozy to Hodgson must depend on the chroniclers for their knowledge of al-Ḥākim's benevolent acts and progressive reforms as

well as his atrocities. While Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd, al-Musabbihī, Michael of Tinnīs, and Hilāl al-Sābī form a relatively coherent and unfavorable picture of al-Hākim so as to provide mutual verification, there is no other source or collection of sources so reliable or informative that it permits impugning their image of al-Hākim. For instance, the Druze documents are valuable chiefly for the final years of the reign and are difficult to reconcile even chronologically with the standard historical sources.¹³⁸

Whatever one may think of the sophistication of Yahyā's conclusion--that a pernicious humor which first affected the Caliph as a boy was the cause of his abnormal behavior--Yahyā's picture of al-Hākim is reasoned, restrained, and balanced. Therefore, it cannot be summarily dismissed simply on the ground that it is the view of a Christian and one who was not a member of the tiny Ismā^Cīlī splinter group which enjoyed al-Hākim's favor. After all, the view of a miniscule but influential minority is not necessarily more accurate than that of any other sect or faction.

Some Significant Characteristics of al-Hākim's Reign

From the preceding discussion which focused on what was not happening in Egypt in the time of al-Hākim, something of the reality of this period has come to view. It would be useful on the basis of the actual conditions

existing in Egypt to inquire what policy alternatives were available to al-Ḥākim when he came to power in 1000 at the age of fifteen and what might have caused him to stray from the conventional secular pattern set for him by his predecessors.

Fāṭimid propaganda traditionally had a twofold impulse. The first was the Fāṭimid claim to the universal Caliphate and Imamate; the second that Imsāʿīlism would inaugurate a better and juster social, economic, and political order.¹³⁹ These goals were not necessarily conflicting. However, by A.D. 1000 there had arisen contradictions in Fāṭimid goals and policy and tension within Fāṭimid Ismāʿīlism.¹⁴⁰

The Fāṭimid claim to the universal hegemony of their Imamate emphasized the illegitimacy of the ʿAbbāsids. The establishment of the Fāṭimid capital at Baghdad would be a sign of their divinely-ordained mission. A story, probably apocryphal but nevertheless illustrative, describes how al-Muʿizz, when he had arrived in Cairo, received an ambassador from Byzantium. "Do you remember," al-Muʿizz said, "when you came to me as a messenger, and I was in Mahdiyya, and I said to you, 'You will come to see me [when] I am sovereign of Egypt.' "... "I am saying to you [that] you will come to see me in Baghdad, and I will be Caliph."¹⁴¹

Soon after this episode al-Muʿizz died, and the Fāṭimid march on Baghdad came to a standstill. The

deathbed speech of al-^CAzīz's vizir Ya^Cqūb b. Killis in 380/991, in which he advised his sovereign to leave the Byzantines at peace so long as they remained peaceful and to accept a loose acknowledgement of vassalage from the Hamdānid amir of Aleppo, although almost certainly apocryphal, is perhaps indicative of the way in which an aggressive policy in Syria was viewed while he was vizir.¹⁴² Ibn Killis seemed more interested in consolidating Fātimid rule in southern Syria than in spreading it to the rest of Syria. His pacific policy, however, was difficult to reconcile with Fātimid propaganda and the professed goals of the dynasty. Possession of Aleppo was a necessary steppingstone for any campaign against Baghdad; it was the veritable corridor to Iraq (dihlīz al-^CIrāq).¹⁴³

However, attacking Aleppo would risk involving the Byzantines who were bound by treaty to the Aleppan rulers and for whom the preservation of Aleppan independence was the keystone of their policy toward North Syria.¹⁴⁴ Once the restraint of Ibn Killis' presence was removed, al-^CAzīz did not wait long before trying to annex Aleppo to his state. Campaigns against the city took place in every or almost every year from 381/990-991 until al-^CAzīz died while at the head of an army on its way to Aleppo in 386/996.

At the very beginning of his reign al-Hākim was confronted with the decision whether to continue the war

against the Byzantines at full tilt. Intermittent hostilities continued in the four years of the regency of Ibn ʿAmmār and Barjawān, but factional struggles seem to have used up most of the new regime's energy. When al-Ḥākim became the actual administrator of affairs, 25 Rabīʿ II, 390/April 4, 1000, Barjawān had already sent an embassy to Constantinople, which concluded a treaty of ten years duration.¹⁴⁵ This treaty created a direct impediment to the realization of Fāṭimid claims to universal Imamate as well as calling into question Fāṭimid boasts of being more able to cope with the Byzantine menace than were the ʿAbbāsids.

Another piece of unfinished business remaining to al-Ḥākim when he achieved power was the introduction of the juster political, social, and economic order that Fāṭimid propaganda had promised.¹⁴⁶ The social revolution was still to come although some progress toward this goal may have been made under al-Muʿizz and al-ʿAzīz.

Satisfaction of both the urge for external conquest and that for justice and equality involved a fundamental conflict over resources. The abolition of non-Qur'ānic taxes (mukūs, rusūm) was a preliminary and unavoidable part of the introduction of a juster social order. While on the one hand it is doubtful whether any large army could be equipped and put in the field without the revenues from non-Qur'ānic taxes, on the other hand the subjects

of the Fāṭimid caliphate had waited thirty years for the era of pure justice and universal well-being. Were they tired of waiting for the fall of Baghdad and Constantinople to see its initiation? Had the Fāṭimid state become a conventional political phenomenon, obsessed with the daily business of government and forgetful of its self-professed historic mission?

The answers to these questions are still subjects of speculation, but, it appears that al-Ḥākim, when he graduated from tutelage and became the real ruler of Egypt, was faced with the choice whether external or internal goals were to take precedence in his reign. If he had been a normal ruler in the stamp of his predecessors, al-Ḥākim would have chosen to stress external policy--the goals of conquest. Instead, he inclined toward the primacy of internal goals.

The most notable characteristic of his internal policies is that they flaunted class privileges. The common people had unprecedented access to the seat of power while the influence of the elite was greatly diminished. Because of their high position in both commerce and government, Jews and Christians were the object of class antagonism as well as religious jealousy.

Although notice has occasionally been drawn to al-Ḥākim's public welfare decrees, they generally have been overshadowed by the attention his more draconian measures have received. A catalogue of his public welfare measures

includes reform of the judiciary, appointment of an incorruptible chief gādī, Ibn Abī al-^CAwwām, reform of commercial weights and measures, manumission of his mamlūks, abolition of illegal taxes, extermination of dogs in Cairo, reform of the dirham in 397/1006-1007, as well as many monetary gifts and distributions to the poor.¹⁴⁷ He established both Sunni and Shī^Cī centers of learning.

It is to be expected that other of his official actions--forbidding the restoration of churches, the enforcement of dress restrictions first imposed on Christians by ^CUmar b. al-Khattāb (13-23/634-644), absolute prohibition of alcoholic beverages--found ready support among the Muslim masses. Indubitably, some elements of the population supported the restrictions on females. Al-Hākim's record of positive legislation demonstrates beyond a doubt his sympathy with the mass of his subjects and his interest in their welfare. One gathers that it was to this stratum that al-Hākim catered in building a new base for his power in place of the conventional bureaucratic-military forms of control.

Some of his other measures, however, conflicted with his urge to cultivate popular favor. These included the posting of public insults to Sunni cult figures and prohibition of popular foods, such as mulūkhiyya, watercress, and almost all species of fish. It is significant

that the anti-Sunni insults were withdrawn after two or three years and the practice of putting up public insults was banned. The Sunnis probably made up a majority of Egypt's population, perhaps a large majority, while Ismā^cīlīs and other Shī^cīs were only a small minority. Perhaps, this was an instance where al-Hākim recognized a political error and backed off. Yet, this retreat would have made more political sense during rather than after the rebellion of Abū Rakwa. The ordinance against defaming the Sunni cult figures was repeated again later in al-Hākim's reign, so certainly someone continued writing anti-Sunni graffiti in public places.¹⁴⁸

Al-Hākim was conspicuous for his vacillation and total reversals of policy. In 400/1010, for example, al-Hākim, five years after having ordered the defamation of the Sunni cult figures, established a Sunni college (dār al-^cilm) such as he had set up for the Ismā^cīlīs in 395/1004-1005 and maintained Sunni scholars like Abū Bakr al-Antākī with government stipends. This was all part of al-Hākim's apparent change of heart toward his Sunni subjects. For three years al-Hākim's benevolence toward the Sunnis continued. Then without warning the Sunni dār al-^cilm was closed and many of the Sunnis were killed. Al-Hākim's tolerance of the Sunna had ended.¹⁴⁹

This wholly typical example illustrates the erratic nature of al-Hākim's reign. Occasionally one of his

policies directly clashed with another. Thus, at the time he was instigating the propagation of his own divinity, he appointed or maintained in office those who were steadfastly opposed to it, such as the dā^ci al-du^cat Khatkīn. The wālī ^cahd ^cAbd al-Rahīm b. Ilyās was outrightly hostile to the Druze, as he proved as governor at Damascus.¹⁵⁰ Al-Hākīm's appointment of Christian vizirs sometimes coincided with the intensification of anti-Christian persecution.

Instead of a single, overall practical strategy or program of reform, a variety of impulses gave al-Hākīm's reign its hallmark. His socially-minded reforms were often put in force, retracted, and renewed for reasons which were either left unstated or have failed to reach us. The abolition of non-Qur'ānic and extraordinary taxes is a case in point.¹⁵¹

None of al-Hākīm's apologists have been able to suggest a defensible rationale for his order that the markets be kept open throughout the night while the streets were artificially illuminated, disregarding the encouragement such increased opportunity gave to all kinds of immorality and vice.¹⁵² This may have been a lavish example of self-indulgence for al-Hākīm was passionately fond of riding through the streets during the night. And what explanation can be found for al-Hākīm's prohibition of chess-playing?

In these circumstances, Yahyā was not alone in trying to find an explanation for al-Ḥākim's strange actions. In 399/1008-1009, al-Ḥākim decreed that no one might discuss his affairs, his orders, or his thoughts.¹⁵³ Obviously, questions concerning al-Ḥākim were in many people's minds. The dā^Ci Hamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī wrote in defense of al-Ḥākim, "If the true Imamate is established once in one person, one must not condemn his deeds even if they appear completely devoid of wisdom."¹⁵⁴ Al-Kirmānī appears to be confirming Yahyā's statement that al-Ḥākim's followers interpreted his cruel and brutal actions as mysteries with hidden purposes which ordinary humanity cannot comprehend.¹⁵⁵ Al-Kirmānī thus admits that al-Ḥākim's activities could appear completely devoid of wisdom to one who did not understand their Ismā^Cīlī background. That he feels called upon to make this admission at all indicates the extent of doubt al-Ḥākim's actions aroused.

Despite the priority given to internal policy over external, al-Ḥākim does not seem to have discarded the goal traditional to Fāṭimid foreign policy of trying to reach Baghdad: he was reputedly working zealously for the capture of Baghdad and the replacement of the ^CAbbāsīd by the Fāṭimid caliphate.¹⁵⁶

However, al-Ḥākim went about it in a different way than had his predecessors. In place of the great armies

which had laid siege to Aleppo at the end of al-^CAzīz's reign, al-Ḥākim placed more reliance on missionaries whose duty it was to subvert Iranian and Iraqi society with Ismā^Cīlī propaganda. At the same time he dispatched sums of money to win over such rulers as Qirwāsh b. al-Muqallad and Mahmūd b. Sebuktigin of Ghazna.

In the end, as it happened, there was no substitute for control of the contiguous territories of Syria and the availability of strong military forces capable of supporting indigenous Ismā^Cīlī and pro-Fāṭimid movements in Iraq and Iran. The short-lived revolt of the ^CUqaylid Qirwāsh b. al-Muqallad against ^CAbbāsīd primacy showed the limitations of al-Ḥākim's piecemeal efforts to fulfill the goals of Fāṭimid propaganda. Undeniably, progress toward Baghdad ended in his reign.

Although the Fāṭimid empire reached its greatest territorial extent during al-Ḥākim's reign, these limits were nominal and ephemeral. Aleppo was brought under Fāṭimid control for a short time, but no real progress was made in the pacification of Syria and in its integration into the Fāṭimid state. When the Banū al-Jarrāh formented a rebellion in Palestine and seized Ramla, the provincial capital, in 401/1010-1011, it was two years and five months before a Fāṭimid army could scatter the rebels and retake Ramla in Muharram, 404/July-August, 1013.¹⁵⁷ Al-Ḥākim's fear and suspicion of his subordinates produced reactive fear and suspicion on their part

and further hindred consolidation of Fāṭimid authority in the provinces. In 1021, when al-Ḥākim died, Aleppo was in revolt, Damascus was insecure, and Palestine was in the hands of the untrustworthy Banū al-Jarrāḥ. The whole of Syro-Palestine was ripe for the revolt which would break out four years after al-Ḥākim's death.

Although the economic prosperity of Egypt was in no way diminished, it is hard to see any other positive legacy of al-Ḥākim's reign. Rather than arbitrating between the extreme and conservative wings of the Ismāʿīlī movement, al-Ḥākim became entangled with the extremists. His own claims to be the manifestation of divinity incarnate were decisively rejected by his subjects, even those who had earlier been won over by his generosity and asceticism. The principal emotional legacy of al-Ḥākim's reign appears to have been relief at his disappearance. He ruled not through loyalty or a traditional type of authority but by means of a reign of terror unprecedented in Islamic history. He was one of a relatively small group of rulers in history, who combined a warm sympathy for the masses with an appalling cruelty toward the individual.

As is well-known, the cause of his disappearance or murder has remained a mystery, one that is all the more insoluble as there was a multitude of parties with motives for wanting his removal. He had antagonized almost every

faction of Egyptian society. All that is known for sure is that he disappeared while walking alone in the Jabal al-Muqattam (hills) east of Cairo during the night of 27 Shawwāl, 411/February 13, 1021. A few days later his robe, ripped by what appeared to be dagger slashes, turned up, but his corpse was never located. None of the stories that circulated explaining the cause of his death or naming the murderer has the ring of authority while the Druze believe that he has only concealed himself to appear again one day.

It has been suggested that al-Ḥākim set a standard for his subjects by his own flawless conduct and disdain for pomp.¹⁵⁸ One wonders what effect his behavior could have had which would overshadow the killings he ordered throughout his reign. Al-Ḥākim's apologists have neither denied nor explained the incalculable number of murders with which the chroniclers charge him, and these murders were not limited to victims from the upper classes. No compensating benefit can be found for the fear and terror he imposed upon his people. As a ruler, al-Ḥākim should be judged--apart from his gratuitous cruelty--on the basis that many of his actions seemed to lack a perceptible purpose, if not appearing totally inexplicable, that he frequently reversed his own policies and completely contradicted himself, and that, in the end, his policies were wholly unsuccessful.

The most telling question in connection with al-Ḥākim's reign is whether the Fāṭimid state was in any degree stronger or better integrated in 1021 than it had been in 1000. Under al-Mu^Cizz and al-^CAziz, the Fāṭimid star was in ascendance. In the time of al-Zāhir (411-427/1021-1036) this was no longer clearly true and in al-Mustansir's reign (427-487/1036-1094) decline had obviously set in. With al-Ḥākim's reign ended the period of Fāṭimid dynamism and energetic conquest. It was a dramatic opportunity missed at a crucial moment.

The roots of failure were planted in al-Ḥākim's own peculiar personality. Hodgson is probably correct in proposing that serious religious purposes motivated al-Ḥākim's actions, but he is certainly off the track when he suggests that al-Ḥākim was an effective ruler. Precisely because he let religious principles impinge on raison d'état, he was eventually rejected by his own people and perhaps must bear the principal guilt as the party most responsible for allowing the Ismā^Cīlī impulse for world domination to dissipate itself.

Al-Ḥākim's special sensitivity to his own religious mission had a great deal to do with the moral nature of his reign. Beyond his concern for justice and legal taxation and his great generosity, morality was even stressed in his manner of killing. The heir of the person executed received his rightful inheritance, which the

state scrupulously passed on to him. In this way, al-Hākīm demonstrated that in his regime executions were ordered on the basis of just reasons and not for the purpose of enriching the state, as they had been in the past.

The study of astrology was of particular interest to al-Hākīm. In this he created a personal monopoly for himself by outlawing the practice of astrology and threatening to exile all astrologers from Egypt. Al-Hākīm himself was reputedly very learned in the science of astrology.¹⁵⁹ His attempt to monopolize the study of the occult in his own hands sheds light on his basic beliefs and religious views.

Everything that has been said serves to suggest that al-Hākīm saw himself nurturing sincere wishes for his subjects' welfare, while he in fact preserved his authority through an extreme and arbitrary authoritarianism, exaggerated to the point of inexplicability. Al-Hākīm used his "freakishness" as a vehicle for enhancing his personal authority in the eyes of his subjects. This was by no means unheard of. Ivanow writes, "However strange it may be, such freakish and insane-seeming behavior on the part of religious persons have everywhere and always a great appeal for the masses; all kinds of faqirs, mendicant dervishes, etc., specially cultivate it.-it is indeed their stock in trade."¹⁶⁰

In conclusion, our investigation has shown Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's account of the events of al-Ḥākim's reign to be credible and balanced. He was not oblivious to al-Ḥākim's positive achievements but realized the difficulty of reconciling these with the brutality and irrationality of other actions. In many of his statements he anticipates the observations of modern scholars. All in all, Yahyā's account of these years is a convincing examination of a problem demanding historical investigation. His diagnosis of al-Ḥākim is certainly the most consistent one possible in view of the irreconcilable range between the Caliph's beneficial achievements and his bizarre and cruel deeds.

Although the questions of al-Ḥākim's reign are far from resolved--further study of Ismā^Cīlī and Druze sources will be crucial for this--it is clear that Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's is the most sophisticated, extant medieval attempt to treat and deal with the unusual problems that the study of his reign presents to the historian and that no serious student of this period can afford to ignore his statements or casually discount their value.

Footnotes

¹Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt al-A^Cyān, V, 292-293; Al-Rawhī (before 1285) in Itti^Cāz al-Hunafā, II, 119; Ibn al-Fuwatī (642-718/1244-1318) in Itti^Cāz al-Hunafā, II, 122; Ibn Zāfir, Akhbār al-Duwal al-Munqati^Ca, 43; al-Dhahabī in Ibn Taghrībirdī, al-Nujūm al-Zāhira, IV, 178; Ibn al-^CIbrī (Bar Hebraeus), Mukhtaṣar Ta'rīkh al-Duwal, ed. A. Sālihanī, (Beirut, 1890), 313; Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī, Mir'at al-Zamān, Munich, 378c, 44v; al-Maqrīzī, Khitāt, II, 289.

²J. V. Hammer-Purgstall, The History of the Assassins (London, 1835), 33-34; S. de Sacy, L'Exposé de la Religion des Druzes (Paris, 1838), I, p. iv; G. Wiet, L'Égypte Arabe, v. IV in G. Hanotaux, Histoire de la Nation Egyptienne (Paris, 1931-), 195; S. Goitein, A Mediterranean Society (Berkeley-Los Angeles, 1967), I, 34.

³R. Dozy, Essai sur l'Histoire de l'Islamisme (Leiden, 1879), 287-288; A. Müller, Der Islam im Morgen- und Abendland (Berlin, 1885-1887), 629-630; P. K. Hitti, The Origins of the Druze People and Religion (New York, 1928), 26-27; M. G. S. Hodgson, "Al-Darazī and Ḥamza in the Origin of the Druze Religion, Journal of the American Oriental Society, 82 (1962), 14, 18, and The Venture of Islam (Chicago, 1974), II, 26-28; P. J. Vatikiotis, "Al-Ḥākim bi Amrillah: The God-King Idea Realized", Islamic Culture, 29 (1955), 1-8, reprinted in Vatikiotis, The Fatimid Theory of State (Lahore, 1957), 149-159, to which reference is made here. S. N. Makarem, "Al-Ḥākim bi-Amrillāh, An Essay in Historical Reinterpretation", (abstract) Proceedings of the Twenty-seventh International Congress of Orientalists, Ann Arbor, 1967 (Wiesbaden, 1971), 229-230; P. H. Mamour, Polemics on the Origin of the Fatimi Caliphs (London, 1934), 186.

⁴Vatikiotis, Fatimid Theory of State, 152; P. K. Hitti, Origins of the Druze, 26-27; Dozy, Essai, 287; Müller, Der Islam, I, 629. According to S. N. Makarem, "In confronting such a personality, the historians either misunderstood al-Ḥākim or underestimated such facts as they could not explain." al-Abhāth, 23 (1971), 319. While Dozy and Müller had available to them mostly fourteenth

and fifteenth century historians and did not know who the al-Masīhī (al-Musabbihī) cited by al-Maqrīzī was, Vatikotis, who completely ignores Yahyā, and Makarem have disregarded both the advances in source criticism and the superior sources that have become available since Dozy and Müller's time. See also E. Graefe, "Al-Hākim", EI, II, 224-225, and F. Rosenthal, A History of Muslim Historiography, 2nd ed. (Leiden, 1968), 63, who writes, "In their works, Muslim historians also made use of historical judgements which obviously were the result of political bias. . . The Fātimid al-Hākim was considered a madman or, more shrewdly, a man of contradictions."

⁵W. Ivanow, Ismāīlī Literature-a Bibliographical Survey (Tehran, 1963), 78-79, and Ismaili Tradition Concerning the Rise of the Fatimids (Calcutta, 1942), 13-14; J. Sauvaget-C. Cahen, Introduction to the History of the Muslim East (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1965), 147; The relevant section of the Uyūn al-Akhbār exists in manuscript, but I was unable, unfortunately, to locate a copy for use in writing this chapter.

⁶Ivanow, Rise of the Fatimids, 2-4.

⁷De Sacy lists the items forming the collection in L'Exposé de la Religion des Druzes, I, ccccliv-dxvii.

⁸De Sacy, Religion des Druzes, numbers 2, 5, 19, 26, 28, and 51 in the list cited in the preceding footnote.

⁹D. R. W. Bryer announced that he has completed an edition of the first forty letters as part of his Oxford University doctoral thesis: "The Origins of the Druze Religion", part 1, Der Islam, 52 (1975), 46-83. It has not yet appeared in published form.

¹⁰For instance, Marshall Hodgson commented, "Al-Darazī and Hamza", 11, "The accounts which we have of the public activities of the men of the Hākim cult do not permit a sure judgment on what happened. Hamza's own statements are allusive and the chroniclers seem to confuse diverse episodes. As they stand, the chroniclers' reports bear a close relation to Hamza's statements but permit no identification of particular events."

- ¹¹M. Canard, "Al-Hakim", EI², III, 81.
- ¹²Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^cāz al-Hunafā, II, 3-111.
- ¹³Escorial ms. 534, part 2, partially edited by Becker, Beiträge, I, 59-80.
- ¹⁴Yahyā, PO, 255/463.
- ¹⁵See above chapter 3, part 2 on al-Musabbihī.
- ¹⁶Yahyā, PO, 256-257/464-465.
- ¹⁷Ibid., 261/469.
- ¹⁸Ibid., 272-273/481-486. See also The Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa, trans. A. Dostourian, Ph.D. thesis, Rutgers University, 1972, 48-51.
- ¹⁹Yahyā, PO, 272/480.
- ²⁰Ibid., 272/273/480-481.
- ²¹Ibid., 280/488. Krachkovskii and Vasiliev took Miṣr here to refer to all Egypt, but it is more likely, being mentioned at the beginning of al-Hākim's persecutions, to be a reference to al-Fuṣṭāṭ.
- ²²Yahyā, PO, 283-284, 287-288/491-492, 495-496.
- ²³Ibid., 304-306/512-514.
- ²⁴W. Hinz, Islamische Masse und Gewichte (Leiden, 1955), 59: a royal cubit = 66.5 cm. or about twenty-six inches.
- ²⁵Yahyā, PO, 260, 282, 294, 300, 302/468, 490, 502, 508, 510.
- ²⁶Ibid., 300/508.
- ²⁷Ibid., 256, 280-281/464, 488-489.

²⁸Ibid., 301-302/509-510.

²⁹Ibid., 302/510.

³⁰Ibid., 303-304/511-512.

³¹Ibid., 303-304/511-512.

³²Yahyā, CSCO, 232; Sāwīrus b. al-Muqaffa^C, Ta'rīkh Batārikat al-Kanīsat al-Misriyya (Cairo, 1948), II, part 2, 133. Sāwīrus' continuator, Michael, Bishop of Tinnīs, says that the harshest persecution of the Copts was in the region of Tinnīs and its environs.

³³Yahyā, PO, 254, 388/462, 496. The date which Yahyā gives for Arsenius' death is open to question.

³⁴Ibid., 285, 291, 299/493, 499, 507.

³⁵Ibid., 311/519; CSCO, 221-222.

³⁶Ibid., 10/708.

³⁷Yahyā, CSCO, 228.

³⁸Ibid., 228-232.

³⁹Ibid., 231-232.

⁴⁰Ibid., 233. Bishop Michael of Tinnīs confirms Yahyā's statement: Sāwīrus b. al-Muqaffa^C, Ta'rīkh Batārikat, 135.

⁴¹Yahyā, PO, 260, 272/468, 480.

⁴²Ibid., 282-283, 290-291/490-491, 498-499; CSCO, 221.

⁴³Ibid., 309/517.

⁴⁴The Kutāma Berbers were an extremely important element in the Fātimid army in this period.

⁴⁵Yahyā, PO, 261/469.

⁴⁶Ibid., 289/497.

⁴⁷Ibid., 278, 281/486, 489; CSCO, 223.

⁴⁸Ibid., 252-253/460-461.

⁴⁹S. Zakkar, The Emirate of Aleppo, 1004-1094 (Beirut, 1971), 40.

⁵⁰Yahyā, CSCO, 211, 214-215. Kamāl al-Dīn Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubdat al-Halab fī Ta'rīkh al-Halab, ed. S. Dahan, I (Damascus, 1951), 199-200, mentions Fātimid attempts to gain control of Aleppo in 400/1009-1010 and 402/1011-1012.

⁵¹Yahyā, CSCO, 239; PO, 252/460.

⁵²Ibid., 210, 213.

⁵³Ibid., 210-216.

⁵⁴Ibid., 226-227. On ahdāth, see Cahen, "Ahdāth", EI², I, 256, and "Mouvements populaires et autonomisme urbain dans l'Asie Musulmane du Moyen Âge", Arabica, 5 (1958), 225-250.

⁵⁵Yahyā, CSCO, 226.

⁵⁶Yahyā, PO, 295-298, 312/503-506, 520.

⁵⁷Ibid., 268-269/476-477.

⁵⁸Ibid., 304-305/512-513.

⁵⁹Ibid., 308-309/516-517.

⁶⁰Ibid., 309/517.

⁶¹Ibid., 262-263/469-470.

⁶²Ibid., 284-285/492-493; CSCO, 209.

⁶³Ibid., 208.

⁶⁴Ibid., 301-302/509-510.

⁶⁵Ibid., 261, 289/469, 497; CSCO, 226.

⁶⁶Yahyā, CSCO, 222.

⁶⁷Ibid., 222. Also 308/516.

⁶⁸Yahyā, PO, 307-308/515-516; Goitein, A Mediterranean Society, I, 34, cites this statement as an example of the Fātimid capacity to make friends and influence people.

⁶⁹Yahyā, PO, 308/516.

⁷⁰Ibid., 306-307/514-515; CSCO, 217, 221.

⁷¹Yahyā, PO, 307/515. For praise of al-Ḥākim from a Jewish source, see D. Kaufmann, "Beiträge zur Geschichte Agyptens aus jüdischen Quellen", ZDMG, 51 (1897), 442-444, and J. Mann, The Jews in Egypt and in Palestine under the Fatimid Caliphs (Oxford, 1920), I, 32-34.

⁷²Yahyā, PO, 310-311/518-519.

⁷³Yahyā, CSCO, 209

⁷⁴Ibid., 221.

⁷⁵Yahyā, PO, 303/511.

⁷⁶Ibid., 306, 310/514, 518; CSCO, 208-209, 219.

⁷⁷Yahyā, CSCO, 217.

⁷⁸Ibid., 220.

⁷⁹Ibid., 222.

⁸⁰Ibid., 222.

⁸¹According to Druze belief, Ḥamza b. Aḥmad, whom they regard as the founder of the Druze religion, preceded al-Darazī; see S. Makarem, The Druze Faith (Delmar, New York, 1974), 18-22, and also Hodgson, "al-Darazī and Ḥamza", 5-10, for a convincing independent point of view.

⁸²Yahyā, CSCO, 224.

⁸³Ibn Zāfir, Akhbār al-Duwal al-Munqatiʿa, 53; Ibn Taghrībirdī, al-Nujūm al-Zāhira, IV, 183.

⁸⁴Yahyā, CSCO, 222.

⁸⁵Hodgson, "Al-Darazī and Ḥamza", 17, fn. 80, discounts the significance of this statement. "Antākī, typically, refers to the participants as min al-riʿāʿ, but such a phrase does not mean much." All the same, no one with a distinguished Fāṭimid or Egyptian family background is known to have joined the Druze.

⁸⁶Yahyā, CSCO, 224.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*, 221, 225.

⁸⁸*Ibid.*, 224-225.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, 225-226.

⁹⁰*Ibid.*, 221.

⁹¹Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 028.

⁹²Yahyā, CSCO, 218-219.

⁹³Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 028-029, Yahyā, PO, 272-273/480-481; CSCO, 219.

⁹⁴P. J. Vatikiotis, "Al-Ḥākim bi-Amrillah: the God-King Idea Realized", Islamic Culture, 29 (1955), 1-8,

is included in slightly revised form in Vatikiotis, The Fatimid Theory of State (Lahore, 1957), 149-159, to which reference is made here.

⁹⁵Vatikiotis, Fatimid Theory of State, 153-154.

⁹⁶Ibid., 156-157.

⁹⁷Ibid., 154.

⁹⁸Ibid., 150.

⁹⁹Ibid., 150.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., 151.

¹⁰¹Ibid., 153.

¹⁰²Ibid., 153, 155.

¹⁰³S. N. Makarem, "Al-Hākim bi-Amrillāh, An Essay in Historical Reinterpretation", 229; "Al-Hākim Bi-Amrillāh's Appointment of his Successors", Al-Abhāth, 23 (1971), 321.

¹⁰⁴Makarem, "Al-Hākim bi-Amrillāh, An Essay in Historical Reinterpretation", 230.

¹⁰⁵Yahyā, PO, 253/641. In view of Vasiliev's statement, History of the Byzantine Empire, first ed., 379, second ed., 311, that "At the very outset of the eleventh century a treaty of peace was reached by the Emperor and the Egyptian caliph al-Hākim," which confirms Muḥammad ʿAbdallāh ʿInān's assertion of the same fact., Al-Hākim bi-Amrillāh w' Asrār al-Daʿwa al-Fāṭimiyya (Cairo, 1938), 100, both of whom Vatikiotis cites, it is difficult to see how he could have doubted the conclusion of a Byzantine-Fāṭimid peace treaty in A.D. 1000. It appears that his doubt, for which he advances no supporting evidence, is based solely on the inconvenience this treaty's existence makes for his thesis.

¹⁰⁶Ibn al-Qalānisi, Dhayl Ta'rīkh Dimashq, 54; Abū Shujā^c al-Rūdhrāwarī, Eclipse, III, 230; Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil IX, 122. All three writers drew extensively on Hilāl al-Ṣabī.

¹⁰⁷Ibn al-Azraq, Ta'rīkh Mayyāfāriqīn, 96; Ibn Taghrībirdī, al-Nujūm al-Zāhira, IV, 227, Ibn al-Jawzī, al-Muntazam, VII, 248-251; Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, IX, 223; Bar Hebraeus, Mukhtaṣar Ta'rīkh al-Duwal, 311, Chronography, I, 185, all taking their information from Hilāl al-Ṣabī. Also Ibn al-Dawādārī, Kanz al-Durar, VI, 283; H. Busse, Chalif und Grosskönig, 86.

¹⁰⁸Yahyā, PO, 308/517.

¹⁰⁹Ibn al-Jawzī, al-Muntazam, VIII, 255-256, Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī, Mir'at al-Zamān, Munich 378c, 1r-lv, Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, IX, 236; Ibn Taghrībirdī, al-Nujūm al-Zāhira, IV, 229-231. English translation in Mamour, Polemics on the Origins of the Fatimi Caliphs, 25-26.

¹¹⁰E. Ashtor, Histoire des Prix et des Salaires dans l'Orient Médiéval (Paris, 1969), 115.

¹¹¹B. Lewis, "The Fatimids and the Route to India", Istanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası, 11 (1949-1950), 50-54.

¹¹²A. S. Ehrenkreutz, "The Crisis of Dīnār in the Egypt of Saladin", JAOS, 76 (1956), 180.

¹¹³S. D. Goitein, "The Exchange Rate of Gold and Silver Money in Fatimid and Ayyubid Times, A Preliminary Study of the Relevant Geniza Material", Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient, 8 (1965), 1, fn. 1.

¹¹⁴Al-Maqrīzī, Ighāthat al-Umma bi Kashf al-Ghumma, trans. G. Wiet, under the title "La Traité des Famines de Maqrizi", JESHO, 5 (1962), 16; Al-Nuqūd al-Islāmiyya, ed. S. M. B. al-^cUlūm (Najaf, Iraq, 1967), 27-28; Itti^cāz, II, 69.

¹¹⁵Al-Maqrīzī, "Traité des Famines", 15-18.
Vatikiotis has mistakenly assigned the period of economic disorder to 390-396/1000-1006. Fatimid Theory of State, 152.

¹¹⁶Al-Maqrīzī, "Traité des Famines", 17-18.

¹¹⁷Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 69.

¹¹⁸G. E. v. Grunebaum, Classical Islam: A History, 600-1258 (Chicago, 1970), 115; S. D. Goitein, "From the Mediterranean to India", Speculum, 29 (1954), 196, fn. 27. Cahen, "Dhimma", EI², II, 229; On the Coptic scribe Ibn Shīrīn see Sāwīrus b. al-Muqaffa^C, Ta'rīkh Baṭārikat, II, part 2, 128, al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 81.

¹¹⁹Vatikiotis, Fatimid Theory of State, 162.

¹²⁰D. R. W. Bryer, "The Origins of the Druze Religion", part I, Der Islam, 52 (1975), 47-83.

¹²¹Hamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī, "Al-Risāla al-wā^Ciza fī nafy da^Cwa ulūhiya al-Hākīm bi-Amr Illāh", ed. Muhammad Kāmil Husayn, Majalla Kullīyat al-Adab Jāmi^Ca Fū'ad I, XIV, part 1; (1952), 23. It is also significant that Ivanow in Rise of the Fatimids finds no doctrinal basis for the idea of al-Hākīm's divinity in Ismā^Cīlī literature.

¹²²Yahyā, CSCO, 222.

¹²³M. G. S. Hodgson, The Venture of Islam (Chicago, 1974), II, 26-27.

¹²⁴Dozy, Essai, 283, 287; Müller, Der Islam, I, 629-630.

¹²⁵V. Ivanow, Rise of the Fatimids, 123, 147.

¹²⁶Yahyā, CSCO, 224.

¹²⁷Ibid., 222.

- ¹²⁸Bryer, "Origins of the Druze Religion", 76; Hodgson relied extensively on Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd for information contained in the article "Al-Darazī and Hamza".
- ¹²⁹Ibn Sa^Cīd, Kitāb al-Mugrib, (Einleitung), 102.
- ¹³⁰Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt al-A^Cyān, IV, 377-380, #653.
- ¹³¹Becker, Beiträge, 61, 70.
- ¹³²T. Bianquis, "La Prise du Pouvoir par les Fātimides en Égypte", Annales Islamologiques, 11 (1972), 51; B. Lewis, The Origins of Ismailism (Cambridge, Eng., 1940), 7.
- ¹³³D. Bryer, "Origins of the Druze Religion", 76.
- ¹³⁴Yahyā, CSCO, 223.
- ¹³⁵Sāwīrus b. al-Muqaffa^C, Ta'rīkh Batārikāt, 115-138/174-209. G. Graf, Geschichte der Christlichen Arabischen Literatur, II, 300-302.
- ¹³⁶Sibt b. al-Jawzī, Mir'āt al-Zamān, Munich 378c, 12r. Yahyā, CSCO, 214-215, Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, I, 213-214, al-^CAzīmī, Ta'rīkh, quoted by Zakkar, Emirate of Aleppo, 58, fn. 28.
- ¹³⁷Sibt b. al-Jawzī, Mir'āt al-Zamān, Paris Arabe 5866, 220a; Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, IX, 199.
- ¹³⁸S. N. Makarem, The Druze Faith, Chapter 2, "The Story of the Movement", 14-39, has written the history of the first years of the Druze movement entirely from Druze sources. He has relied, to judge from the footnotes, more heavily on Druze chronicles than on actual contemporary Druze documents. See also fn. 7 above.
- ¹³⁹M. Canard, "L'Impérialisme des Fatimides et leur Propagande", Annales de l'Institut d'Études Orientales de la Faculté des Lettres d'Alger, VI, (1942-1947), 156-193, especially 158, 171.

¹⁴⁰W. Madelung, "Das Imamāt in der frühen ismailitischen Lehre", Der Islam, 37 (1961), 114-115; Hodgson, "Al-Darazī and Hamza", 17.

¹⁴¹Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, IX, 663; Ibn Abī Dinār, "Al-Mūnis fī Akhbār Ifriqiyya wa Tūnis" in M. Amari, Biblioteca Arabo-Sicula (Turin and Rome, 1881), II, 281.

¹⁴²Ibn al-Qalānisī, Dhayl Ta'rīkh Dimashq, 32, Ibn al-Ṣayrafī, al-Ishāra, 23, Ibn al-Jawzī, al-Muntazam, VII, 156; Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt al-A^Cyān, (life of Ya^Cqūb b. Killis); Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, IX, 77. This particular combination of sources suggests strongly that the original source for the story of Ibn Killis' speech was Hilāl al-Ṣābī. He was the chief authority for Ibn al-Qalānisī, Ibn al-Jawzī, and Ibn al-Athīr in respect to Syrian and Egyptian affairs in these years. Ibn Khallikān also used his chronicle extensively, although he also knew al-Musabbihī's great history. Sometimes, however, he preferred Hilāl al-Ṣābī to Musabbihī. Only the relationship of Hilāl al-Ṣābī to Ibn al-Ṣayrafī is unclear, but the chronicle of the former was certainly widely diffused and well known in Ibn Ṣayrafī's (463-542/1071-1147) lifetime.

¹⁴³According to Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, IX, 85, Bakjūr referred to Aleppo as "dihlīz al-^CIraq".

¹⁴⁴Zakkār, The Emirate of Aleppo, 40.

¹⁴⁵Yahyā, PO, 253/461.

¹⁴⁶Canard, "L'Impérialisme des Fātimides", 171.

¹⁴⁷Yahyā mentions most of these measures. Professor A. S. Ehrenkreutz has suggested that al-Hākim ordered the extermination of the dogs in al-Fustāt for the same reason that a modern city appoints a dog catcher.

¹⁴⁸Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 98; Yahyā, PO, 309/517.

¹⁴⁹Sibt b. al-Jawzī, Mir'āt al-Zamān, Paris Arabe 5866, 241v-242v; Ibn Taghrībirdī, al-Nujūm al-Zāhira, IV, 222-223. This information, the probable source of which is Hilāl al-Šābī, may not be completely reliable. However, Yahyā, PO, 262/470, says that al-Hākim acted in the same way after establishing the Ismā^Cīlī dār al-^Cilm in 395/1004-1005.

¹⁵⁰Hodgson, "Al-Darazī and Hamza", 15.

¹⁵¹Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 15, 74, 79, 87, 89, 93, 96, 102 on non-Quranic and extraordinary taxes.

¹⁵²Hodgson, The Venture of Islam, II, 27, has now proposed that "Even the most bizarre of his whims seems to have been touched with a serious religious purpose. Thus it would seem [underlining the present writer's] that his decree about night-time business was partly designed to demonstrate that his police were so efficient and his justice so rigorous that night was as safe as day; and indeed he seems to have been vindicated." Both al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 38, and Yahyā, PO, 255/463, contradict Hodgson's statement: It was as a result of the immorality fostered by al-Hākim's original order that women were placed under a curfew and wineshops ordered closed.

¹⁵³Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 77; On the prohibition of chess, Itti^Cāz, II, 90.

¹⁵⁴Madelung, "Das Imamāt", 120.

¹⁵⁵Yahyā, CSCO, 222.

¹⁵⁶Yahyā, PO, 309/517.

¹⁵⁷Ibid., 295-296, 312/503-504, 520; al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 87, 100.

¹⁵⁸E. Graefe, "Al-Hākim, EI, II, 224-225.

¹⁵⁹ Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt al-A^Cyān, III, 294.

¹⁶⁰ Ivanow, Rise of the Fatimids, 147; Madelung, "Das Imamāt," 114-115.

THE BYZANTINE-ARAB CHRONICLE (938-1034)

OF YAḤYĀ B. SAʿĪD AL-ANTĀKĪ

Volume II

by

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CHAPTER 6

HISTORIOGRAPHIC ASPECTS OF YAHYĀ B. SA^CĪD AL-ANTĀKĪ'S "CONTINUATION" (TA'RĪKH AL-DHAYL)

The preceding chapters have thrown some light on the sources Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd used in composing his "Continuation" (ta'rīkh al-dhayl) of Eutychius' Nazm al-Jawhar and shown the most controversial part of his chronicle, that concerning al-Ḥākim, to be a valuable and balanced account. The object of the present chapter is to consider the chronicle as an example of historiography. To accomplish this, discussion centers first on the fundamental characteristics of the chronicle and Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's methods in composing it. His personal attitudes and their influence on what he wrote are discussed in the latter part of the chapter.¹

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd was a citizen of two worlds, and the influence of both Byzantine and Muslim Arab cultures is visible throughout his "Continuation." As M. Canard has observed, it presents the extremely strange characteristic of being both a Byzantine Christian and an Arab-Muslim chronicle at the same time.²

Unlike other Christian historians writing in the Arab lands of the central Islamic world, Yahyā b. Sa^cīd does not focus on the life of his particular Christian community as the central topic of his history.³ His ability to view the travails of the Melkite church under Islamic domination in organic relationship to the larger political events of the time gives his chronicle a reasonableness and breadth of vision that other Christian chronicles written under the Caliphs lack. It is probably this trait which led Ḥabīb Zayāt to remark that "The [Continuation] is the best history of Christianity in Islam."⁴

This is not to say that his interest in secular politics and diplomatic relations diminished his importance as a historian of the Melkite community in Egypt and Syria. Actually, the reverse is true. His perspective contributes to the impression of veracity which his statements convey. His most precious information concerning Christians pertains to the reign of al-Ḥākim, for which he himself was an eyewitness.

Yahyā b. Sa^cīd is a source of unparalleled importance for the knowledge of relations between the Byzantine Empire and the neighboring Arab states. The significance of his information for the reconstruction of the history of these relations, as shown in Part III of this dissertation, demonstrates the unique value of the "Continuation" in this respect.

He is also an informant of the highest quality for the history of his native land, Egypt, as M. Canard noted.⁵ However, the publication of al-Maqrīzī's Itti^cāz al-Hunafā fī Akhbār al-Khulafā' al-Fātimīyīn has reduced the general importance of his chronicle. For al-Maqrīzī and Yahyā b. Sa^cīd shared some sources, and al-Maqrīzī is fuller in his presentation of them. Nevertheless, Yahyā's description of the reign of al-Ḥākim is in method and skill the finest example of historical writing in the chronicle and, in the technique of its approach, may possibly rank as one of the most brilliant examples of medieval Arabic historiography. He also makes some colorful remarks on the reign of al-Ḥākim's son al-Zāhir and the "return to normalcy" after the death of al-Ḥākim.⁶

For properly Syrian affairs Ibn al-Qalānisī, the historian of Damascus, overshadows Yahyā b. Sa^cīd.⁷ However, he presents information to which Ibn al-Qalānisī did not have access, and he had the advantage of living during or soon after the events of which he was writing.

For the history of the Byzantine state proper, as opposed to that of the eastern frontier, Yahyā b. Sa^cīd supplements the Byzantine chroniclers writing in Greek. Byzantine chronography in general is characterized by its narrow concentration on the affairs of Constantinople to the neglect of provincial matters. Although Yahyā b. Sa^cīd spills comparatively little ink on the problems

of the capital, he does not lose sight of them. Occasionally, as for the date of the fall of the Parakoimomenos Basil in 985, he supplies a fact of crucial importance not found in the Byzantine chronicles. Their relative poverty for the reigns of Basil II (976-1025) and his successors, Constantine VIII (1025-1028) and Romanos III Argyros (1028-1034) lends value to his history. Yahyā is also a key authority for the wars the Byzantines waged against the Bulgarians and Bulgarian affairs of that period.

The major Byzantine chronicle for this period is the Synopsis Historiarum of Johannes Skylitzes, who wrote in the second half of the eleventh century. He is followed by the twelfth century writer Johannes Zonaras, whose narrative differs from Skylitzes' only on a small number of points. Skylitzes passes over the reign of Basil II relatively quickly. There is not much in his account to indicate that here was one of the most glorious emperors, perhaps the most glorious, since the reign of the famed Justinian almost five centuries earlier. He neglects to mention the reforms aimed at buttressing the ruling Macedonian dynasty's power which by necessity, it would seem, must have followed Basil II's victories in the civil wars of 976-979 and 987-989.

Much of Skylitzes' chapter on the reign of Basil II is taken up with an account of his wars against the

Bulgarians. Skylitzes is the only major source for the history of these wars, yet his account is deficient in chronological data, a point where Yahyā b. Sa^cīd's brief passages on the Bulgarian wars furnish some much needed assistance. Skylitzes is also hopelessly confused in dealing with the Byzantine eastern frontier.⁸ The startling deficiencies he shows in that sphere raise real questions about the level of his critical capacities in general.⁹

The history of Leo Diaconus concentrates on the reigns of Nicephoros II Phocas and John Tzimiskes but, being written in a rather exaggerated literary style, is somewhat weak as history, particularly in the author's neglect of chronology. Leo Diaconus devotes four chapters of the tenth and last book, seven pages in all, to the reign of Basil II. Obviously such a short passage can be no more than helpful even though the author was a contemporary of Basil II. Leo Diaconus was still living in 992.¹⁰

Michael Psellos (1018-1078) gives vivid short sketches of the reigns of Basil II, Constantine VIII, and Romanos Argyros. Scholars have been eager to accept Psellos' words at face value although it is obvious that his Chronographia is a set of memoirs with all the exaggeration, venom, and parti pris normally found in that genre of historical literature as practiced by a polished

intellectual and top-level bureaucrat. Psellos' sketches are impressionistic and not chronographic in the sense that they attempt to list events as they happened. His statements must be addressed with more than the normal amount of caution. This is no less true for the early portions of his book than for the latter, which cover the period when he himself was an important figure in Byzantine politics.¹¹ Actually, Psellos was a small boy at the time of Basil II's death while Psellos' sketch of his reign concentrates on its early years. Thus, it does not have even the advantage of being a memoir.

The other important source for this period is the Strategikon or "Book of Counsels and Narratives" by Kekaumenos, in which the author addresses advice to random audiences which are difficult to identify but appear to include strategoi, civil magistrates, toparchs (rulers of petty states bordering the Empire), the Emperor, and his own sons on how to avoid the perils awaiting those who serve and administer the Byzantine state. Written between 1071 and 1078, it is not a history at all but contains numerous historical examples for the course of conduct it recommends. It hardly fills the gap left by the absence of a detailed chronicle for the period 976-1034. Nevertheless, the unique information it transmits is frequently valuable.¹²

Occasionally Yahyā b. Saʿīd supplements the Byzantine historians; occasionally he offers an alternative account. In both cases, he was placed as advantageously as they to have had reliable sources for the period on which he writes and, in his ability to evaluate sources and synthesize their information, he was probably superior to the Byzantines. This makes it all the more regrettable that the usefulness of Yahyā b. Saʿīd's "Continuation" for general problems of Byzantine history has not been fully realized.¹³

Yahyā b. Saʿīd set out to write neither a massive world or universal history nor a scanty handbook (mukhtasar) of events. Rather, he sought to find "a middle way" which he did by imposing restrictions on the subject of his work. The history of the Western Islamic world and Iran he deemed beyond its scope. He also ceased to refer to events in Iraq after 991. The unavailability of sources may have forced this limitation upon him. The neglect of the city and region of Mosul, at least as long as it had a separate history as an independent amirate under the Hamdānids Nāṣir al-Dawla (317-358/929-969) and his son Abū Taghlib (358-369/969-979), is also conspicuous. Whether this was due to his own disinterest or his inability to find suitable sources is impossible to say.

Yahyā b. Saʿīd's interest above all else was in politics and diplomatic relations. Of these, judging

from the skepticism he showed in incorporating reports into his chronicle, he was a sophisticated observer. His work, like Eutychius' Nazm al-Jawhar which it continues, is a history of the Christian communities of the eastern Mediterranean. Economic history, details of social and anthropological interest, and proper religious history exercised no attraction to his mind.

The format of Eutychius' Nazm al-Jawhar was the most important influence on Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd in arriving at a pattern of organization for his "Continuation," as he acknowledges: "I will arrange this [book of mine] in the manner according to which [Eutychius] arranged his and I will proceed in it by the same procedures in which he proceeded."¹⁴ He goes on to say that he will mention the names of all the kings and caliphs, the duration of their reigns and what he knew of their deeds, lives, and the events of their times, just as Eutychius did.

It was Eutychius (263-328/877-940) who chose not to write his history as annals, so that each event would be cited under the year in which it took place, but to employ continuous and sometimes parallel sequences of events, according to their locale. This practice connects Eutychius with the tradition of Byzantine historical writing which has been given the name Church History; it begins with Eusebius and includes Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret, and, oddly enough, disappears from view in

Byzantium with Evagrius at the end of the sixth century.¹⁵ Eutychius was also the model for Yahyā's limiting his coverage to the central Islamic lands and Byzantium and set the example of inserting notices whenever the eastern patriarchates, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, were filled and vacated.

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's attitude vis-à-vis the author of the work he is continuing is quite interesting. Although Eutychius was the model for some of the most important characteristics of his history, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd is critical of the methods which he employed in writing the Nazm al-Jawhar. It is clear, but never explicitly stated, that a vastly different conception of what is important in history separated the two men. For Eutychius the paramount strand in his history is Christian history.

"Rarely do we find," Prof. Rosenthal wrote of the Nazm al-Jawhar, "a reference to remarkable natural phenomena or to a political event which did not immediately concern the author's co-religionists."¹⁶ As a churchman and universal historian, Eutychius' interests were in Church History and events that were far in the past. These interests converged in long digressions dealing with Jacobites, Nestorians, and other heretics.

To Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd church history was a subsidiary subject to his principal occupation, political history. His reaction to Eutychius' interest in the distant past is articulated in his statement that "people are more

inquisitive and have a greater desire to know the reports of events closer to [their own] time."¹⁷ This contrast in perspective is visible in the treatment each gives to the coverage of contemporary events. Eutychius traces the history of the sixty-three years from his birth until the end of his chronicle two years before his death in fewer pages than Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd allots to the six year reign of Romanos Argyros (1028-1034).¹⁸

The thrust of Eutychius' history is to minimize the importance of the Islamic period. In contrast, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd emphasizes the history of the Muslim dynasties. The most striking instance where he compensates for an omission by Eutychius is the history he inserted in the "Continuation" of the Fātimid caliphate's origins and arrival in North Africa, which began with the birth of ^CUbaydallāh al-Mahdī at Salamiyya in Syria in 260/874 and ends with his death in 322/934.¹⁹

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd is a chronicler rather than an annalist, although traces of the annalistic form appear in his chronicle. The annalist, of course, places events strictly under the year of their occurrence, which precludes recounting a continuous narrative longer than one year in duration.²⁰ While Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd attempts to recount events of the same year together, he frequently violates the annalistic form to retrace a story from its beginning or to carry a narrative to the end. He does

this most often when he concentrates on a train of events in a certain country or region.

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd traces a number of parallel histories simultaneously in the "Continuation." He does not arrange these at all systematically. Rather he follows randomly the course of events in Baghdad, Byzantium, North Syria, and Egypt as well as the fate of the Christian communities of Antioch, Aleppo, Jerusalem, and Egypt. He picks up the story in one place, drops it, and comes back to it as events demand or the rhythm of his narrative permits. Sometimes long lacunae occur in the chronicle where he has ignored a certain subject. This happens even when a source would seem to have been available as, for instance, in the case of Thābit b. Sinān for Iraq or in that of Egypt during the caliphate of al-^CAzīz (365-386/975-996), when Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd was growing up there.

The Chronology of the "Continuation"

Both Eutychius and his continuator relied on the Muslim system of dating from the Hijra as the chronological foundation of their histories. The Muslim era, which made possible simple continuous dating and was unanimously used by Muslims, had certain advantages over any other system in use in Egypt, such as dating by the years of a patriarch's tenure in office. Furthermore, in

all likelihood, the majority of Yahyā b. Sa^cīd's sources used the Muslim system.

If he had begun to write at Antioch rather than arriving there with a finished redaction of his chronicle under his arm, he might have chosen to use the Seleucid era as a basis for the chronology. It was introduced in 312 B.C. during the reign of Seleucus I Nikator, the founder of the Seleucid dynasty, from whom it took its name.²¹ Fifty-four dates in the "Continuation" are given according to the Seleucid system. Almost all of these relate to Byzantine and Christian affairs and, in particular, to the history of Antioch and north Syria. After giving the Seleucid date, as a rule Yahyā b. Sa^cīd translates it into the Muslim era according to the year of the Hijra. The use of Seleucid dating indicates that he drew the information to which the date pertains, at last instance, from a local north Syrian or southeast Anatolian Christian source or sources.²²

Yahyā b. Sa^cīd's chronicle is also divided into reigns: at first of the ^cAbbāsīd caliphs, then of ^cAbbāsīd and Fātimīd caliphs, and finally of Byzantine emperors, if the heading at the beginning of Romanos III Argyros' reign can be taken as typifying the lost section which followed. These headings, however, do not serve as focal points around which the narrative is organized and facts are grouped. They merely emphasize dates of

special significance. Their use, perhaps, is a legacy of the ancient lists of kings with which Byzantine historiography began and shows to how great a degree history remained the story of kings and emperors.

Occasionally, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd dates an event in relation to a particular year during a reign, for instance, "Christūdhulā b. Bahrām, Patriarch of Jerusalem, died... and this took place in the fifth year of the caliphate of al-Mutī^C," or "The Emperor [Basil II] departed from the land of the Abkhazian [Georgian] king in the direction of Byzantine territory, and that was in the forty-eighth year of his reign, that is [A.H.] 414."²³ This, however, is the system least favored by Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd.

Finally, he also mentions, in addition to the reigns of the caliphs and emperors, the names of the occupants of the patriarchates of Alexandria, Jerusalem, Antioch, and Constantinople.

Originally, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd may have divided his chronicle into two parts. Rozen noted that in the Paris manuscript of the "Continuation" after the report of al-Hākim's death comes the statement: "Part one of the ta'rīkh which Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd composed ends here, and part two follows it." The same statement was not included in the manuscript which Rozen used in Leningrad."²⁴ In it, however, the part following the death of al-Hākim begins with the basmalah.²⁵ This also could indicate the

introduction of a new part. Nevertheless, whether the death of al-Hākim actually formed the dividing point in the original work, with a whole second part of roughly equal length to the first following it, remains a moot point. None of the other manuscripts used by Vasiliev and Krachkovskii in their edition has either the statement found in the Paris manuscript or the basmalah.

The "Continuation" then is a continuous narrative which includes several parallel subnarratives. These are divided by regnal periods and marked by the appointments and deaths of the eastern patriarchs. The basic system of chronology is the Muslim era, which calculates dates by the number of years elapsed since the Hijra. The chronicler occasionally supplements this by the use of the Seleucid era and, infrequently, by stating the number of years elapsed in a particular ruler's reign. This variety of chronological tools, when conscientiously and accurately employed, provided a tight framework in which to construct a narrative although the wide range of chronological data with which Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd had to deal raises considerable problems of synchronization.

Apparently, he considered himself to be an expert of sorts on questions of chronology. Under the year 397/1007 he wrote that a great dispute broke out among all the Christian sects as to whether Easter would fall on April 6 or April 13 in that particular year. For there

were two methods of calculating the date of Easter, both of which were dependent on the Jewish calendar. He acknowledged with characteristic broadmindedness that both methods were correct. Egyptian Christians of all sects eventually agreed among themselves on the first date. After much heated controversy they managed to impose this date upon their co-religionists in Syria and Palestine.²⁶ As a conclusion to this episode Yahyā b. Saʿīd wrote:

I intend to prepare a special treatise in which I will explain how this uncertainty arose and how it should be guarded against, and I will point out the years in which it arises. I had intended to insert a resume of what I want to put in this treatise in this place in my book, but I decided that this was irrelevant to the object I was pursuing. If what I have mentioned of this did not enter into the sum of events which should be recorded in histories and records [fī al-tawārīkh wa'l-siyar], I would have omitted it.²⁷

His willingness to write a special treatise on chronology shows his interest and confidence in his own ability in that field. His self-proclaimed expertise is borne out by the sound chronological structure of the "Continuation." This has invaluable consequences, especially for Byzantine history since the contemporary chronicles after the death of Romanos II in 963 are notoriously weak in chronology.

Yahyā b. Saʿīd's Orientation to his Sources

In leaving his sources anonymous Yahyā b. Saʿīd followed the example of Eutychius, who in turn was also guided by earlier practice. Neither in contemporary

Byzantine chronography nor in the various Christian traditions was the origin of one's information identified. The Muslim tradition, which demanded citation of isnāds, chains of authorities, was unique in the Middle East then in its insistence that sources be named. Even among Muslim chronographers, however, the custom was losing force at this time as, for example, a glance at the Tajārib al-Umam by Miskawayh will show. Thus, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd, while undoubtedly aware of the emphasis the Muslim historical tradition put on verification, was free of any influence from the science of ḥadīth.

He selected sources which, as far as is determinable, were generally accepted as trustworthy. Among these were the Byzantine chronicle of the Logothete and the chronicles of Thābit b. Sinān, Ibn Zūlāq, and al-Musabbihī. It can be assumed that he had access at various times to a great--possibly far greater--number of sources than can actually be identified. What he looked for in choosing an authority can be seen from the study of his sources for Iraqi history, which is contained in Chapter 2. The comparisons made with the text of Miskawayh's history show that what he took from Thābit b. Sinān and the Anonymous Iraqi chronicle were essentially factual narratives.²⁸ This, of course, accords completely with the nature of Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's own chronicle. Similarly, in using the Vita of Christopher, Patriarch of Antioch, he

has chosen, from a genre of historical literature not known for its historicity, a specimen of hagiography which has as its central part a rather convincing account.

At some point after A.D. 1000 Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd must have become much more dependent on oral sources. His chapter on al-Ḥākim relies to a large extent on his own observations. But what of al-Ḥākim's deeds after Yahyā's departure from Egypt and the first activities of the Druze sectarians? For these he must have listened to second-hand reports, which he could then have evaluated in the light of his own experience.

The final portion of his chronicle, covering the period from the fall of al-Ḥākim (411/1021) until the death of Romanos Argyros (1034) has as its focal point the history of the Antioch-Aleppo region. It centers on the warfare between the petty dynasts of the coastal mountains, the Fāṭimids, and the Byzantines. Antioch was the seat of the dux, who represented Imperial authority in north Syria. Through local connections with the neighboring Arab populations, through the Byzantine military in North Syria, governmental and administrative ties with Constantinople, and family relations uniting the Christian emigrants from Egypt with their kin at home, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd had access to sound information on north Syrian, Constantinopolitan, and Egyptian matters.

Thus, for the latter sections of his chronicle, which are much more restricted in scope than what precedes, the use of anonymous oral sources and his own experiences and observations are sufficient to account for his factual knowledge.

Also, the appearance at this point in his history of elementary errors of a sort that are very rarely found in the previous sections indicates the shift from written to oral sources. For instance, he has misdated the end of Basil II's Georgian campaign, in which the Emperor suppressed the hostile King Gēorgi I, to 414/1023-1024; he also mistakenly states that the King handed over his son Bagrat as a hostage for a period of two years. These statements contradict those of all the other sources, according to which Basil II departed from Georgia in 1022 and the peace agreement called for Bagrat to remain at Constantinople for three years.²⁹

Similarly, Yahyā b. Sa^cīd says that the cause for the failure of the embassy which the Fāṭimid regent Sitt al-Mulk sent to Basil II in 1024 was her own death, and he notes the visit of the Fāṭimid ambassador to Antioch in Ṣafar, 415/April 14-May 12, 1024, on his return trip to Jerusalem where he was the Orthodox patriarch. However, al-Maqrīzī, relying on al-Musabbiḥī's great History of Egypt, put the death of Sitt al-Mulk on 1 Jumādā II, 415/August 10, 1024.³⁰ Al-Musabbiḥī, who was a prominent

Fāṭimid official, could hardly have mistaken so important a date. This suggests that Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd must have had an incorrect report of the reason for the failure of the Fāṭimid embassy.

Thus, with the transition to greater reliance on oral, probably almost contemporary, reports, a decline in accuracy took place.

It is obvious from those of Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's sources that can be identified and from other textual indications that he drew his material from an extensive number of sources. His own statement that these were divided into three groups suggests that he had ample data at his disposal.³¹ In producing a consistent and unified narrative with no apparent self contradictions, he was amazingly successful at avoiding the pitfalls presented by the availability of an abundance of sources. An excellent illustration of the skill and care he exercised in this respect is furnished by the story of the flight of the former Ḥamdānid amir of Mosul, Abū Taghlib, after ^CAdud al-Dawla had made himself master of Iraq. Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd shared with Miskawayh a common source which traced Abū Taghlib's peregrinations. At first he took refuge at Ḥiṣn Ziyād (Kharput) while the revolt of his ally Bardas Skleros continued. With Skleros' defeat, he went to Amida where, according to Miskawayh, he remained until ^CAdud al-Dawla's troops captured the neighboring city of Mayyāfāriqīn soon after 2 Jumādā I, 367/December 16, 978.³²

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd, however, says that Skleros' defeat took place 21 Sha^Cbān, 368/March 24, 979.³³ Thus, unless he is mistaken as to the date of the battle, there was an error in the common source. Abū Taghlib could not have returned to Amida before the fall of Mayyāfāriqīn. Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd, in line with the date he gives for Skleros' defeat, has emended the common source to say that Abū Taghlib left Amida only when the Būyid troops were actually investing that city.³⁴

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's painstaking attention to detail in harmonizing the versions of authorities of radically different backgrounds resulted in a smooth narrative. But the question of how he combined and synthesized sources is more involved than that. For it reaches to the heart of his conception of history and the historian. Apparently, he decided that strictly factual material, which lent itself to objective reportage, belonged in the chronicle but that explanatory statements, which were essentially conjectural and subjective and thus were not completely reliable, did not.³⁵

In this light an alleged omission from Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's account of the Fātimid attack in 382/992 on Hamdānid-ruled Aleppo is worth considering. V. R. Rozen criticized his failure to mention the role of ^CAlī b. al-Husayn b. al-Maghribī and the other important causes in provoking the attack. "Undoubtedly there were facts about

[these things] in his sources;" Rozen wrote, "He himself could see and listen to contemporaries and eyewitnesses of these events, and the participation of Bakjūr's former vizir [al-Maghribī] could not have been a secret for contemporaries." Rozen blamed the supposed omission on excessive haste and carelessness.³⁶

What really is at issue here is a question of historiographic method. Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd says that the Fāṭimid army, commanded by Manjūtekīn, entered Syria to put down the revolt of a rebellious governor at Damascus and that the death of the Ḥamdānid amir Sa^Cd al-Dawla Abū al-Ma^Cālī coincidentally fell at that very time. It offered the Fāṭimids a wonderful opportunity to seize the Amirate of Aleppo.³⁷

However, an alternative tradition, found in a group of sources which follow al-Shimshātī but probably in a version "improved" by Hilāl al-Sābī, maintains that al-^CAzīz dispatched Manjūtekīn and his army from Egypt with the intention that he would lead it against Aleppo. These sources also claim that personal antagonism developed between Abū al-Ma^Cālī and al-^CAzīz and reached the point of open hostilities immediately before the death of the former. In the midst of all this, purportedly, was Ibn al-Maghribī, who had once served Abū al-Ma^Cālī and after that had been vizir to his treacherous retainer Bakjūr. After Bakjūr died in an effort to take Aleppo from Abū

al-Ma^Cālī, Ibn al-Maghribī fled to Egypt where he urged al-^CAzīz to capture the Hamdānid capital.³⁸

As Rozen points out, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd had the opportunity to question contemporaries and eyewitnesses of these events; yet he nevertheless seems to ignore the importance of Ibn al-Maghribī and the personal antagonism between Abū al-Ma^Cālī and al-^CAzīz in precipitating the Fātimid attack on Aleppo. In representing it as the natural consequence of Fātimid aggressive designs toward North Syria coming in conjunction with the perfect occasion for their realization, that is, the death of the tough and experienced Amir and his replacement in uncertain political circumstances by an untried junior, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd is actually giving an individual explanation for the mounting of the campaign against Aleppo. His explanation, which is completely different, is much more credible than that of the competing tradition in that it does not depend on a questionable story of personal influence and conspiratorial intrigue.

Whichever author, al-Shimshāṭī or Hilāl al-Ṣābī, gave the account of Ibn al-Maghribī's influence on al-^CAzīz, the hatred of the Caliph and Abū al-Ma^Cālī for each other, and so forth probably did not simply invent it. He heard the story and accepted it as he found it consistent with his own view of the motive forces in human affairs. He was convinced, it would appear, that history

can be explained as a matter of personalities, of personal greed, and vanity.

Only in one case, that of the Vita of Patriarch Christopher of Antioch by Ibrahīm b. Yuhannā, is it possible to compare the text of Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's "Continuation" with that of an actual source. Almost everything he took from the Vita, which amounted to only a fraction of that work, came from its middle part dealing with the sequence of events leading to the murder of the Patriarch in May, 967. It mentions, inter alia, the withdrawal of the aged and ailing amir Sayf al-Dawla to Mayyāfāriqīn, the revolt of some of his leading subordinates at Antioch in collaboration with a few of the best citizens, the Patriarch's retiring to a nearby monastery, Dayr Sim^Cān, so as to disassociate himself from the rebels, their eventual defeat with the return of Sayf al-Dawla, the Patriarch's intercession to gain them a pardon, their successful plot after the Amir's death to murder the Patriarch and, finally, the Byzantine capture of Antioch and the execution of the murderers. Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd did not include in his history the chapters on Christopher's early life, his election to the Patriarchate, his administrative activities as patriarch, or those praising his religious zeal, uprightness, asceticism, and charity, or one comparing Christopher with other Christian saints.³⁹

The parts of the Vita Christophori which were most characteristic of hagiography Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd ignored. He repeated what was pertinent to the rebellion at Antioch and the story of the Patriarch's murder. He has also considerably shortened what he borrowed. His version is essentially a *précis* of the original.

The comparison of the Vita with his narrative of the same events also shows how Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd tailored what he wrote to the available source material. It is not coincidental that he treats the internal history of Antioch in the decade of the 960's, for which the Vita is an excellent source, in greater detail than any other decade.

He was also well aware of the need for an historian to scrutinize his sources cautiously. His story of how he twice rewrote his history when groups of new sources became available to him, once in Egypt and once in Antioch, reveals a careful and critical mind.⁴⁰ His approach to historywriting was selective, not cumulative. For he says that the addition of new material to his chronicle led him to drop part of what he had originally written.

The remarks Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd makes concerning Eutychius' universal history indicate that he took a critical view of the historical writings of others: "I had intended also to improve the history of Sa^Cīd b. Bitrīq [Eutychius], and I have come across in it what came

to him in distorted form and he did not know with certainty and led him to inaccuracy."⁴¹ Thus, he faulted Eutychius with both intentionally neglecting to mention some events and unintentionally skipping over others as well as with being insufficiently informed to take up some of the subjects of his chronicle. His criticisms of Eutychius are an example of reverse statement. If turned backwards, they form the clearest expression of what Yahyā intended his history to do: to recount events accurately and in undistorted form with full certainty that its facts were correct.

Later in the same passage he describes how he approached a problem of textual criticism. Again the subject is Eutychius and his chronicle.

Before beginning to compose this book I examined a number of manuscripts of that of Sa^cīd b. Bitrīq, and I have found some of them which include the history up to the beginning of the caliphate of al-Qāhir, that is, the year in which Sa^cīd b. Bitrīq became patriarch of Alexandria [320-321/932-933], but others have additions, which are not in the original manuscript by the continuator of the book. I have seen the original manuscript itself and other manuscripts of the book besides it, and its contents end at the caliphate of al-Rādī, that is, in A.H. 326. I have composed this book following this particular manuscript because it is the most complete in exposition and the closest of them in time [to the author]. I believe that the cause of the imperfections at the end of some of these manuscripts and their deficient grasp of what is in the original

manuscript is that the book was copied at different times during the life of the author. Its text became widespread in the hands of the people, and each of the manuscripts was maintained in its totality, carrying the history until the time in which it was written. I am reliant here on the last chapter of the manuscript which is the most complete and perfect, and I will make what I have written follow it, praying the aid of the Lord, requesting from him that he grant success to what I contemplate and intend, and he is [my] leader in his grace and forbearance.⁴²

Most significant is Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's explanation of why there are discrepancies in the closing sections of the various manuscripts. His proposal that copies were made of the history at different times before Eutychius actually completed it is a very reasonable answer to a problem which, while hardly of staggering difficulty, demanded logical and analytic consideration. How many of Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's contemporaries would have seen their way to the solution of such a problem?

Finally, it should be mentioned that in general he severely abridged or condensed the narratives or parts of narratives which he borrowed from his sources. In the end his chronicle can most aptly be characterized as compact. It gathers a great deal of information into a limited number of pages.

The merits of the "Continuation" are due, at least in part, to Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's sophistication in dealing with historical materials. He not only realized the indispensability of sound chronology to an historical

work but was equal to coping with the several different chronological systems which overlapped in his chronicle. He obviously spent long hours puzzling over his sources, picking out the most trustworthy and trying to reconcile or to choose between them at points where their stories conflicted. He was, in addition, a highly selective writer. A great part of the material included in the first redaction of the chronicle, it can be assumed, had been dropped by the third redaction to make room for discoveries in new sources. His authoritative narrative shows the effects of what was probably for the time an extraordinary amount of editing by the hand of an original author.

The most important attribute of the "Continuation," however, is its author's objective: to relate facts, accurately and in undistorted form. To this end he appears to have been averse (except in the case of al-Hākim) to accepting conjectural statements which were not susceptible to verification.

The Reliability of the "Continuation"

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd enjoys a reputation as an authority of the highest quality. This esteem is well deserved. Chapter 5 has shown the basic accuracy of his controversial portrait of al-Hākim. The great value and importance of his testimony for reconstructing the history of Byzantium's relations with its eastern neighbors--Arabs, Armenians,

and Georgians--will become evident to the reader in Part III of this dissertation.

His accuracy in regard to matters of detail is no less sharp than for issues of larger dimension. His chronology of Tzimiskes' Mesopotamian campaigns,⁴³ his version of the number and order of the decisive series of battles during the rebellion of Bardas Skleros,⁴⁴ his statements that David, Duke of Upper Tao, had no son and in 990 willed his possessions to Basil II,⁴⁵ and his assertion that the Fātimids concluded a treaty with the Byzantine Empire in about 1000⁴⁶ have all been singled out for special criticism, closely examined, and vindicated.

This is not to say that there are no inaccuracies and omissions in his history. One narrative containing errors is his discussion of the development of Byzantine relations with the Būyid dynasty after the flight of the rebel Bardas Skleros to Mayyāfāriqīn in 979. The threats of the Būyid amir ʿAdud al-Dawla, aimed at extorting territorial concessions in exchange for the surrender of Skleros, did not daunt the Emperor Basil, who fearlessly rejected the demands. When subsequently relations with Baghdad became chilly, the Byzantine ambassador there was imprisoned. He regained his freedom only by flight.

Unlike the Byzantines Skylitzes and Psellos, who say that Skleros also escaped from Baghdad, Yahyā b. Saʿīd was aware that he was released and dispatched to Byzantium with official support.⁴⁷

The true story is known only through the fortunate survival of a few letters in collections of chancery documents.⁴⁸ Actually, Basil II did agree to make concessions in exchange for Baghdad's relinquishing Skleros. When the deal aborted, Samsām al-Dawla, ḲAdud al-Dawla's successor, released Skleros and supported him in rebellion against the Emperor. The Amir, who was involved in a struggle, which he soon lost, with his brother Sharaf al-Dawla for control of the Būyid empire, could not give Skleros much support.⁴⁹

Probably, the story told in the documents was not public knowledge in Byzantium in Yahyā b. SaḲīd's time. Each party concerned in the civil war of 987-989 had its own reasons for wanting the story of the negotiations with Baghdad hushed up. The Emperor was, certainly, afraid to have it publicly known that he had been willing to make territorial concessions to gain Skleros' release. After the death of ḲAdud al-Dawla the Būyid state entered into a period of political uncertainty as to who would emerge as the new ruler. It was probably this atmosphere which led to Nicephoros Uranos' long sojourn at Baghdad. The story of his imprisonment then is a cover for his unexplained failure to return.

Skleros, of course, made it known that he had escaped from Baghdad in order to avoid being labeled as "Baghdad's candidate" for the Byzantine throne.

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's account agrees substantially with what the misinformed Byzantine writers say. They have embroidered Skleros' adventures among the Arabs and transformed him into an epic figure who, with his Byzantine comrades, even defeated the amir's enemies. The Byzantine audience must have found these tales, although pure myth, reassuringly comforting.⁵⁰

Several seeming inaccuracies, such as the fanciful story of the prisoner Ṣālīḥ b. Mirdās' escape from the citadel at Aleppo, occur in the latter part of the "Continuation."⁵¹ Being chiefly dependent by this point on oral reports, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd was unable to exercise the same control over his sources as in earlier sections of his chronicle. His errors, however, are relatively infrequent.

The evidence suggests that by the standards of the age, he was a skilled chronicler. He sought to record fact accurately, and he was not gullible. With the astonishing reign of al-Ḥākim he blossoms into a true historian. We can surmise that, as a Christian, he found his own personal interest threatened, and, as a rational man, his sense of reason was insulted. The Caliph's extraordinary and bafflingly paradoxical actions were completely outside of his own experience. Nor was there a parallel in recent history. His curiosity was aroused.

The result is the most descriptive, detailed, and probing writing in the whole of his chronicle. Far from being a small-minded assault on the Caliph's reputation, his sketch is a laudable attempt to maintain objectivity in the face of personal misfortune. Despite the anti-Christian persecution that drove him from his homeland, he persists in treating the enigma of al-Hākim as a problem demanding a solution. It is remarkable that the positive attributes of his description have been lost on scholars. For in attempting to find a solution to the extraordinary phenomenon of al-Hākim's reign--the Caliph's utter unconventionality which amounted to almost a complete break with tradition was extraordinary--Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd shows incisive descriptive and analytic capacities.

The first half of his discussion of al-Hākim's reign is in the straightforward narrative style typical of his chronicle. The second half is more topical; Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd groups the events, which he has discussed earlier, in categories. These include a review of the burdens he inflicted on the Christians, his judicial reforms, his generosity with the revenues and possessions of the state and royal house, and his subversive methods for gaining control of the lands nominally ruled by the ^CAbbāsīd caliphate. The transition to a more topical style appears to be connected with his emigration from Egypt in 405/1014-1015.⁵²

Eventually, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd came to proposing his own solution to the riddle of al-Hākim. The precise explanation which he advanced, that a malicious humor attacked the Caliph's brain in his youth and dried it out, may appear silly today, but the suggestion that his abnormal conduct had its root in a medical disorder is eminently sensible.

It took the revolutionary turbulence of al-Hākim's caliphate to incite Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd to depart from what he considered history to be, the accurate, factual chronicling of events, and to attempt what was a truly problem-oriented, analytic approach to explaining the great mystery of his own time. In making the attempt, he has been highly successful. In this part of his chronicle, and in it alone, he achieves the level of historical insight which separates the historian from the chronicler.

Undoubtedly, one of the great advantages he enjoyed in writing his chronicle was access to at least two completely different sets of sources: the Egyptian and the Antiochian.⁵³ Even more important, though, may have been his exposure to two reasonably different cultures and political systems. Until his thirties he lived as a, no doubt, privileged member of the increasingly embattled Christian minority in Egypt. He then moved to Antioch. Unfortunately, there is no way that we could know his reaction to his new home. But we can say for sure that he did not return to Egypt when Sitt al-Mulk invited the

Christian emigrants to return; instead he chose to live out his life in Byzantine Syria. Often the life of a refugee is exceedingly difficult. In any case, he had a broad knowledge of life. His experience on both sides of the Byzantine-Fātimid border may have been the most crucial factor in giving rise to the objectivity, broadmindedness, and hesitance to condemn, which are the most valuable assets of his "Continuation."

Causation, Biography, and Anekdotia
in the "Continuation"

In the Muslim annalistic tradition the essence of chronography is the transmission of unadorned facts.⁵⁴ The intrinsically neutral quality of Arabic historiography drove one historian to lament, "The Arab historians, unfortunately, have the habit of presenting facts to us as a succession of coups de théâtres, and it is up to us to try to figure out the relations [between them], often with little success because the documents are insufficient."⁵⁵ Thus, the question of causation is one of the great problems of Arabic historiography as a tradition.

Yahyā b. Saʿīd in his approach to causation stands with the Muslim Arab historians. As has been seen, he was unwilling to repeat what was conjectural and, therefore, potentially unreliable. This reluctance inevitably produced a conservatism in assigning causes to events. For him, there was a very real division between description,

which rightly falls in the historian's realm, and analysis and explanation, which transcend his competence.

The enigma of al-Ḥākim is an exception. This issue, the most important in the "Continuation," dwarfs every other topic. Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd went to great lengths to explain how so much that was inconceivable had actually happened.

"The cause of his injustice in all the strange, contradictory deeds which he had in mind, which rose out of his soul, and which he perpetrated time after time, was, in fact--although it is a digression from our history relating to him--a kind of pernicious ill humor in his brain which since his youth had caused a type of mālinkhūliyā and a deterioration of the cogitative [faculties] to afflict him."⁵⁶

The explanation of what was at the bottom of al-Ḥākim's personality and actions and, ultimately, of all the turmoil and suffering they engendered was for Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd a digression. This is the clearest statement in the "Continuation" that he did not see attempts at explanation and causation as pertinent to the genre of chronographic literature.

His reluctance to delve into questions of cause under normal circumstances separates him from the Byzantine chronographic tradition. As part of the legacy from classical Greek culture, description of historical

situations attracted the Byzantine chronicler. He was not afraid to explain how an event came to pass or to offer a personal analysis. This tendency was not altogether fortunate, however, as it was not unusual for the author's likes and dislikes to slip into his account.

Nevertheless, an attempt to deal with the problem of causation can be seen in Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's history. Simply by presenting events in a certain order of progression, he creates a logic of causation. Thus, for example, when he tells of the expulsion of the amir Mansūr b. Lu'lu' from Aleppo in Rajab, 416/Dec., 1015-Jan., 1016 and the Fāṭimid coup in gaining control of the city and then mentions that the Byzantine Emperor cut off trade and travel between all his lands and the territories of Syria and Egypt, that is, the Fāṭimid state, it can be assumed that the Fāṭimid takeover in Aleppo was the primary and determining cause for the rupture in commercial relations and the prohibition of travel between Byzantium and the Fāṭimid caliphate.⁵⁷ This is a clear causative statement, and it is unnecessary to look any further for Basil II's motive.⁵⁸

The disadvantage of this approach to the problem of causation is that the reader never knows all he wants to know. While he may know the what of an event, he has only a rough idea of the how. At best, it is a crude solution to the problem. The advantage of this approach

is that the reader is not misinformed. The chronicler states only as much as he can say with confidence.

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd does explicitly link such phenomena as Skleros' departure from Baghdad to raise the standard of rebellion with Basil II's defeat in Bulgaria or the Bulgarian attacks on Imperial territory with Byzantine absorption in the civil war in Anatolia.⁵⁹ However, these are simple connections such as are frequently found in Byzantine chronicles. His source may be responsible.

One other type of causation which he does not invoke is divine will. Nowhere in his history does he refer to the hand of God guiding the course of mundane events. This reluctance to involve supernatural causation in the historical narrative is, perhaps, one of the most important components in Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's outlook. It may explain the relatively secular tone of his chronicle.

One of the salient traits of Muslim Arabic historiography is the extraordinary interest it shows in the lives of outstanding men. The best examples of this interest are the great biographical dictionaries, but even in annalistic chronography it was customary to accompany the statement of an individual's death with a list of his achievements and an appraisal of the deceased's qualities or lack of them. The influence of standard forms of approval or disapproval somewhat hindered the historian's freedom and, hence, diminished the value of these necrologies.⁶⁰

In the indigenous Egyptian historical tradition royal biographies formed the leitmotif. The most famous of Ibn Zūlāq's compositions, for example, were biographies of such men as Muḥammad b. Tughj, Kāfūr, Jawhar, and al-Mu^cizz.

At Byzantium also from the middle of the tenth century the biographical form had experienced a renaissance and dominated the chronographic tradition.⁶¹

None of this appears to have had much effect on Yahyā b. Sa^cīd. In general, he simply noted the death of a prominent individual and added the date and length of his reign. Obviously, he did not believe that the function of history was to record the deeds of important men beyond their roles in the events he was describing.

However, there are a few biographical passages and remarks in the "Continuation," and, since they make up one of the more interesting facets of Yahyā b. Sa^cīd's historical writing, they deserve further consideration.

The only Muslim rulers for whom Yahyā b. Sa^cīd has a few words of praise are ^cUbaydallāh al-Mahdī, the first Fāṭimid caliph in North Africa (297-322/909-934), and al-Mansūr, the third (334-341/946-953). He comments only in passing on al-Mahdī's modesty and humility but calls al-Mansūr "eloquent, sharp-witted, quick to respond, profound, and intuitive."⁶² These words obviously come from his source, which was apparently pro-Fāṭimid, and

do not reflect Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's own feelings. Yet, it is interesting that he has reproduced them for panegyric evaluations of other Muslim rulers were available to him and he ignored them.

Al-Hākīm, of course, is the individual for whom the most biographical detail is found in the "Continuation." However, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's interest in him was as an historical phenomenon, and his treatment was not in the biographical tradition.

The most conspicuous instance where Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd has chosen to desert his normal custom and to comment on the achievements and character of a particular individual is that of the Emperor Nicephoros II Phocas (963-969). This passage begins:

No one doubted that the Emperor Nicephoros would conquer the whole of Syria and the Dīyar Mudar, the Dīyar Rabī^Ca, and the Dīyar Bakr, and that they would pass into his possession. This was because he based his strategy on marching to the area surrounding the cities and to the villages that fed them and attacking them. He burned them and led their populations and flocks away into captivity. When the time to harvest the grain came, he went out and burned all the crops and left the people of the cities dying of hunger. He did that to them year after year until hardship forced them to surrender the cities to him. In this way he conquered all of the Syrian thughūr and the Jaziran thughūr...He killed and carried into captivity so many of their people that God the Exalted alone can know the number because of its magnitude. For his soldiers his invasions were like a promenade because no one attacked them, nor came out to meet them. [Nicephoros] went where he wished and devastated as he pleased without one of the Muslims or anyone else to turn him back or block his way.⁶³

Oddly, this description of the ruthless but effective methods Nicephoros employed to bring Syria and the Jazira into Byzantine hands was not Byzantine. It comes, apparently, from the lost history of Thābit b. Sinān.⁶⁴

The last parts of this evaluation of Nicephoros, however, probably cannot be attributed to Thābit.

The ^CArab [tribes] attacked him [several] times. He defeated them and swept them away. After that they feared him and refrained from approaching him. No one would stand in his way nor [even] tell himself that it was possible to write to him, not to speak of opposing him.

He established the Rūs over the lands of the Bulgarians and by his authority made them rulers of it so that everything came under his sovereignty. He carried out a most handsome correct policy in regard to his affairs and ran an administration without fault.⁶⁵

In regard to what the Byzantine chroniclers say about Nicephoros, this is a very interesting comment on his reign. Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd points out that he made the Rūs' rulers over the Bulgarians and thus, Nicephoros (Yahyā is actually wrong in this) became the ruler of both peoples. He also credits Phocas with an effective policy (does he mean foreign policy?) and a faultless administration. He brings up no negative features of his reign. He is much more favorable than the Constantinopolitan writers in respect to Phocas. While it must be remembered that his praise merely reflects the attitude of his sources, it may be significant that he has allowed their slant toward Phocas to carry over into his own work.

Perhaps, a lingering affection for the great warrior was still felt in the eastern provinces in the chronicler's time.⁶⁶

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd notes perfunctorily the death of John Tzimiskes, but he makes some colorful remarks in recording the death of Basil II in December, 1025. Basil called on his brother not to bury him in the Church of the Holy Apostles where emperors were customarily buried, and where there was already prepared a magnificent sarcophagus for him, but in the Church of St. John the Evangelist outside the walls. He ordered that he not be buried in regal garb, and insisted that not more than twenty dīnārs be spent on the clothing which he would wear.⁶⁷ Yahyā concludes:

Throughout his reign [Basil II] always limited himself in food, drink, and clothing, adhering to a diet all his life. He himself administered all the affairs of his Empire, whether large or small. He left 6,000 qintārs of gold coin and all the money that he found when he took possession of his empire was four qintārs, no more.⁶⁸

His portrait adds to Psellos' caricature in the Chronographia on only a few points but is otherwise consistent with his picture of the severe and ascetic emperor.⁶⁹

The final biographical passage on a Byzantine emperor, coming at the end of the extant part of the chronicle, is devoted to the character of Romanos Argyros and the nature of his reign.

The Emperor Romanos died on Holy Thursday, that is, 11 Nisān, 1345, according to Alexander, and 18 Jumādā II, 425/April 10, 1034 of tuberculosis. The day of his death he had sat, beginning in the earliest morning, for six hours paying salaries to the holders of imperial ranks. He handed the money to 500 of them personally.

[Afterwards] he entered the bath and bathed. He died suddenly in it. He was forbearing, forgiving, firm of faith, and charitable. He had founded in the capital of the empire, that is, in Constantinople, a great monastery, and he took the fullest interest in its construction and the embellishment of its furnishings. He built within it a hospital for the diseased and another place in which travelers might take lodgings. He conferred a great endowment on it to be dispensed in its interests. He used devious means [?] to seize the property of a group of people and attempted to add it to [that of the monastery].

In his time he renewed oppressive taxes on all his lands, and their gravity weighed heavily on all whom his dominion embraced. Everyone, the aristocrats and the common people, rejoiced at his death. He was buried in a sarcophagus he had prepared for himself in his monastery. The term of his rule was five years and five months.⁷⁰

This short summarization of Romanos' achievements and attributes both complements and contradicts the hitherto standard accounts of his reign, given by Psellos and Skylitzes. The most important divergence between Yahya b. Sa^cīd's and their versions is that Yahyā believes that the Emperor Romanos died of natural causes, while Psellos, admitting that Romanos was gravely ill, appears to reluctantly accept the stories which rumored that the actual causes of death were poisoning and violent murder. Skylitzes subscribes completely to those same rumors.

This is an example of Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's characteristic reluctance to trust in unverifiable reports, and, in this case, he appears justified as Romanos' illness alone could have been enough to cause death.⁷¹

All three authors agree that taxation in Romanos' time was ruinous, but Yahyā's is the only voice to evoke the popular bitterness that expressed itself in joy at his death.

He was not aware that the monastery of the Holy Mother of Peribleptos included a great church, at least he does not say so, but he appears to be alone in mentioning that the foundation included a hospital and a hospice for travellers.⁷²

There are a few other examples where the chronicler says a few words or shows particular favor to an individual. Strangely, among these was not Christopher, the martyred Patriarch of Antioch, whose hagiography Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd had available to him.

The importance of his references to Abū Ya^Cqūb b. Anastās, physician to al-Ḥākim for a period, has been mentioned already in several places.⁷³

He included a very favorable notice in observance of the death of the vizir Ya^Cqūb b. Killis. Originally a Jewish money-changer, he had converted to Islam during the reign of Kāfūr⁷⁴ and had entered the service of al-Mu^Cizz before the transferral of the Fāṭimid court to the banks

of the Nile. Evidently, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd had some reason for viewing him with favor. It may have been some sort of personal connection or possibly he showed particular protectiveness toward the ahl al-dhimma, the Jews and the Christians. He says that "[Ibn Killis] was intelligent, ambitious, inspired respect, and was a good governor and administrator." As do the Muslim historians also, he tells how al-^CAzīz came to Ibn Killis' palace to pay his respects and showed great distress at the passing of his faithful servant and longtime vizir.⁷⁵

To be beloved of one's sovereign was apparently an honor, even when he was as whimsical as al-Ḥākim. Zur^Ca b. ^CIsā b. Naṣṭūras was a Christian who held the office of vizir, 4 Muḥarram, 401-12 Ṣafar, 403/18 August, 1010-1 September, 1012. Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd refers to him as "Of splendid demeanor, of praiseworthy manners, beloved of his sultān, of all of his troops, and of his officials."⁷⁶ The author and Zur^Ca b. ^CIsā were contemporaries. Surely, some particular esteem marked his attitude toward the vizir. As in the case of Ibn Killis, we have no idea what it might have been.

This is the sum of the remarks Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd makes to elaborate on the deaths of certain select individuals in his chronography. The number whose deaths he chooses to single out for special mention is very small. It is also conspicuous because it is easily broken down into

categories. The only Muslim rulers whom he praises are the Fāṭimids al-Mahdī and al-Mansūr. To the reigns of three Byzantine emperors, Nicephoros II, Basil II, and Romanos III, he devotes brief summaries. Those of the latter two are similar to the treatment accorded them in Byzantine chronography. They indicate unmistakably the effect that the contemporary Byzantine chronographic tradition had on Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's style once he settled at Antioch. However, the biography of Nicephoros is the most important as it offers a divergent view of his achievements from that given by the Constantinopolitan writers. Finally, he has warm words for three men who were not the leaders of their states. All three were in the Fāṭimid service; two were Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's contemporaries and Christians, the third was Ya^Cqūb b. Killis, who died when Yahyā was a small boy. This is probably the group for which he felt the most sincere esteem. Thus, his praise is limited to non-Muslims except for al-Mahdī and al-Mansūr; their inclusion in this number is probably due to inattentive editing of his sources.

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd was predisposed to avoid including anecdotal accounts in his narrative, as has already been mentioned. Although he obviously took a skeptical view of such unrealistic stories, a small number have nevertheless found their way into his chronicle.

One such anecdote recounts how the Byzantines acquired the fortress of Ra^Cbān, which was located west of Sumaysāt, ostensibly in 370/980-981. The Muslim commander of the fortress held captive an Armenian lady who served him. Her sister and brothers lived in the town of Ra^Cbān. On one occasion the sister was visiting in the fortress when she noted that it was almost unguarded. By letting a strand of spinning thread hang down along the wall, she managed to measure its height. Returning home she convinced her brothers to build a ladder the height of the wall. That night when they and some companions who accompanied them scaled the wall, they found only a single slumbering guard. The master of the castle, desiring to spend the night alone drinking with his harem, had instructed the garrison not to disturb him with their shouts. Consequently, most of them had deserted their posts, and the few guards remaining in the fortress fled in fear when they heard the brothers cry out the name of Basil II. The Armenians slew the master of the castle in his sleep. Subsequently, they turned the fortress over to the Emperor.⁷⁷

This story appears hardly credible, yet Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd chose to include it. Why? The account mentions no date; it can only be inferred from the fact that Yahya has lumped it in with the events of A.H. 370. This right away makes the story suspect. As it is the only

account of the change in the fortress' ownership, there is no way to verify this quaint tale. In the end one is left to his own instincts whether to accept or reject it. Perhaps, the chronicler also hesitated.

By means of another anecdote Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd illustrates his assertion that al-Hākīm ardently desired domination over Iraq and the eastern Islamic lands and was actively working toward that goal. After telling briefly of his efforts to subvert and win over the rulers and populations of these countries through the dispatch of propagandists (du^Cāt) and large monetary bribes and subsidies, he goes on to say:

One of the Iraqi merchants met [al-Hākīm] and implored his assistance. He said that he had merchandise and had brought it through dangerous places and passed with it between Bedouin and highwaymen, and it remained secure in his possession, but it was taken from him in [al-Hākīm's] country. He asked [al-Hākīm] to compensate him immediately if he thought best or to write him a receipt [tadhkira] to pay him back at the time of his entrance into Baghdad when he took possession of it. He was certain that [al-Hākīm] would capture it and the other kingdoms then outside of his grasp. [Al-Hākīm] was pleased by his statement and allowed him what we have mentioned. He received thousands of dīnārs in cash.⁷⁸

Unlike the previous story, this one is relatively credible. Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd uses it to satisfy the same need for which a contemporary scholar would use a footnote: it documents and completes his point. In any case, anecdotes such as

these are exceptional in his chronicle. In the context of medieval historiography he is extremely sparing in their use. While they add a great deal of vitality and color to the narrative, their inherent unreliability clashes with his desire to present facts in an undistorted form.

Yahyā b. Saʿīd's Personal Attitudes and
their Influence

Another aspect of Yahyā b. Saʿīd's mental composition which is equally as important as his capacity for choosing and criticizing sources and his industry in editing and reediting what he wrote in giving the tone of balanced accuracy to his chronicle is his openmindedness. Of course, openmindedness is relative. Both Christians and Muslims believed in the existence of an absolute truth, which negated the rival religion and was in turn thrown in doubt by it.⁷⁹ While Yahyā b. Saʿīd would have been an anachronism if he did not see the world to some degree in the black and white terms of religion, it is important to know how far this view went with him. In short, what were his preconceived values and to what degree did they govern what he wrote?

The issue of prejudice is two-layered for prejudice in an aware mind is both conscious and unconscious. Conscious prejudice, which is clearly and explicitly voiced, can be purposely controlled. Unconscious prejudice is

more subtle. What it amounts to is that which one can accept as credible in his own mind.

Of the first variety of prejudice, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd appears largely innocent. While he has been accused of prejudice in connection with his portrait of al-Hākīm and his reign, as has been seen, none of the scholars who level this charge at him has supported it with arguments which are in the least bit convincing.⁸⁰

The most blatant case of explicit prejudice, in addition to that which Yahyā feels against the Druze, comes at the very beginning of the "Continuation," following the report of the Patriarch Eutychius' death, 30 Rajab, 328/May 11, 940. This passage begins with the statement that a number of physicians from al-Fustāt opposed the election of Eutychius as patriarch. It was also particularly unwelcome to Michael, the Melkite bishop of Tinnīs. Although death took the Bishop of Tinnīs in Safar, 322/Jan.-Feb., 934, the rift continued and took on such bitterness that fathers refused to speak to their sons and wives to their husbands.

Although both the anti- and pro-Eutychian factions appealed to Muḥammad b. Tughj al-Ikhshīd, the new governor of Egypt (323-334/935-946), he came down on the side of Eutychius' opponents. Here Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd, following the source, berates the Ikhshīd. "[He was] a very unjust man [who was] inclined to hear slanders and accept them, and

he put to death and liquidated him who was slandered and concerning whom he was advised.⁸¹

The Ikhshīd sent a deputy to arrest Eutychius and Theophilos, his appointee as bishop at Tinnīs. He also relieved the cathedral at Tinnīs of a great amount of its precious possessions. After attempts to extort further treasures from Eutychius and Theophilos failed, they were taken to Cairo and imprisoned. Influential Christians in the bureaucracy managed to arrange their release in return for the promise of a payment of 5000 dīnārs. The sum was gathered by selling lands belonging to the church. Describing the pathetic condition of Eutychius and his associate Theophilos, Yahyā b. Sa^cīd writes, "The greed of everyone fell on the Patriarch and the Bishop, and [all] eyes were turned on them. They were forced to try to reverse and to appease the hostility of everyone."⁸² Although the unity of the Milkite community was eventually restored, the bitterness of the schism lingered.⁸³

This sad story of his kinsman's sufferings Yahyā b. Sa^cīd has obviously borrowed from a Christian source friendly to Eutychius. Such two-dimensional tales of injustice at the hands of avaricious and hostile governors abound in the chronicles of the Eastern Christian communities. If the source for this report was not a church chronicle, it may have been a family history or some type of family record.

This report represents Eutychius as a victim, seemingly without reason, while it labels his opponent Michael, the original bishop of Tinnīs "wicked." It fails to mention what was the nature of the complaints against Eutychius and does not explain the causes of the violent opposition to him. This dubious passage merits skepticism; it is unquestionably the most transparent case of explicit prejudice found in the "Continuation." While Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd has only accepted the prejudice of another, the responsibility for doing so lies with him. His reason is, perhaps, more connected to personal motives than religious ones. His ancestor Eutychius was, of course, an honored member of his family and, in including this account in his chronicle, he may have been trying to defend his relative's record. Possibly, its inclusion was related to the circumstances under which he was commissioned to continue the Nazm al-Jawhar. In contrast, there is no other place where Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd describes the ill treatment of Christians by their Muslims overlords so bitterly or with equal outspokenness.⁸⁴

While it would be obvious, even without his autobiographical statements, that Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd was a Christian, his Byzantine nationality is far less easily detectable. His description of diplomatic relations and border warfare contains no exaltation at the victories of the Byzantines or condemnation of their Muslim enemies.

Moreover, he incorporated Thābit b. Sinān's report of the ruthless methods Nicephoros Phocas employed in his Syrian campaigns into his own summary of Phocas' reign, as has been seen.

Suppression of information was one of the chief means available to medieval Arabic chronographers for expressing prejudice, given their conception of history as the transmission of facts.⁸⁵ Only one case has come to light where Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd may have intentionally suppressed information in a way that would reflect favorably on the Byzantine Empire. He himself either altered or accepted the alteration of a report taken from the probably pro-Ḥamḍānīd chronicle of al-Shimshātī of the Byzantine defeat in the "Battle of the Ford" in 994 so that it throws the blame for urging battle upon the Byzantines' Aleppo allies rather than on a particular Byzantine general.⁸⁶ But, despite this case, this is a commendable record.

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd appears to have been neutral in the conflict between Fāṭimids and ^CAbbāsids for the leadership of Islam. He has drawn on sources from both camps. Thābit b. Sinān, although not a Muslim, frequented the ^CAbbāsīd court, and Ibn Zūlāq and al-Musabbihī, if not actually Ismā^Cīlī themselves, which is distinctly possible, were sympathetic to Ismā^Cīlīsm.

In particular, his excursus on the history of the Fāṭimids through the caliphate of al-Mahdī, the first Fāṭimid caliph (297-322/909-934) merits attention. When he traces the origins of the Fāṭimid dynasty to Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl b. Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī b. Abū Ṭālib, he accepts the classic Fāṭimid genealogy.⁸⁷ He does not, however, say how the imamate passed from Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl to ʿUbaydallāh al-Mahdī.

In addition, most manuscripts of the "Continuation," including the oldest, refer to al-Mahdī by his correct name, ʿAbdallāh. The name by which he is generally known, however, is ʿUbaydallāh, which anti-Ismāʿīlī historians fixed upon him.⁸⁸

The historical tendency of the passage is obviously pro-Fāṭimid. This is visible in its praise of the character of al-Mahdī and of his actions after he took over control at Raqqāda from his harbinger Abū ʿAbdallāh al-Shīʿī: "Al-Mahdī exhibited modesty and humility. He conferred audiences on the people and [the opportunity of] speech and [his] affection upon them and made promises which delighted them."⁸⁹ There is also an apologia for the murder, ordered by al-Mahdī, of Abū ʿAbdallāh, who had spent long years working for the Fāṭimid victory in North Africa. He is accused of failure to carry out certain civil duties, alienating the population, and jealousy and malicious intentions toward al-Mahdī.⁹⁰ The

inclusion of this apologia leaves little doubt that Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd drew the facts of his excursus on early Ismā^Cīlīsm in North Africa from a source of properly Ismā^Cīlī Fātimid authorship.

Moreover, he was aware of the major points differentiating Ismā^Cīlīsm from Sunni Islam. Speaking of the appearance of al-Darazī, whom he believes to be the initial public advocate of al-Ḥākim's divinity, he says:

By my life, since their first appearance, the claim was made by al-Ḥākim's ancestors, the ^CAlid caliphs, to a set of beliefs [madhhab] not far from this [the Druze] doctrine. It was that they were divinities who descended to the earth in human form, and they possess from the Most High a heavenly light dwelling in them. He appears in every age and time in the form of a man from among humanity. The kings of the world are dependent on them, and they are among mankind, which does not deserve them.

They persist in hiding this set of beliefs of theirs from those who differ from them. To others belonging to the general body of Muslims they declare that the possessor of power (Ṣāhib al-amr) among them is the imam of God and his deputy (Khalīfa) on earth and his proof (hujja) to his people and that the Imamate is superior to the office of prophet (Nubūwa). It rested in Adam and was transmitted to Noah and to Ibrāhīm and to Moses and to so-and-so and so-and-so and so-and-so and from him to his son al-Husayn and from one after another, father to son, down to ^CAbdallāh al-Mahdī the ^CAlid, who appeared in the Maghrib, and then from each of those exercising power to his son after him. In this manner power is passed eternally among them, and one will appear who will subjugate the whole inhabited world and consolidate his authority according to his will, and will remain in his kingdom until God awakens those who are in [their] graves.⁹¹

This thumbnail sketch of Ismā^Cīlī doctrine is accurate on most points. The "principle" that the Imamate is superior to the office of Prophecy, that is, the imam is superior in the hierarchy of Islam to the Prophet Muḥammad, is a common exaggeration of classical doctrine found in popular Ismā^Cīlīsm. The misattribution of this belief, however, is balanced by the knowledge that the Ismā^Cīlī sect maintained a division between the internal covert doctrine of the movement and the doctrine which it openly professed.

No other passages in the "Continuation" are comparable to this. Presumably, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd included this one because of its timeliness; he was writing when the Druze were still a new phenomenon. This passage tells us nothing new about Ismā^Cīlīsm, but a great deal about Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's interest in the beliefs of other groups, his willingness to investigate them with an open mind, and his capacity to understand them. It also shows that he was sufficiently well connected to have access to competent informants on the nature of Ismā^Cīlīsm.

The one group for whose doctrine Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd had no tolerance was the Druze. He accuses them of dropping all the requirements of Islam--fasting, prayer, the responsibility to make the Hajj--of preaching license and incest, of defiling mosques and Qur'āns, and of cursing the prophets.⁹² For what he writes about the earliest history of the Druze he was almost certainly

dependent on the oral reports of Egyptian sources, probably members of the Melkite community with whom he retained personal ties after emigrating from Egypt in 405/1014-1015. It appears that the first public preaching of the ideas that later came to form the Druze religion took place in Egypt only in 408/1017-1018, which is equivalent to the year 1 in the Druze era.

Like almost everything connected with these last, troubled years of al-Hākim's reign, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's statements on the appearance of the Druze are controversial. He presumably did not intend to distort their beliefs, unless this is a unique case of religious prejudice, but he had no direct line into the Druze sect, whose members were enjoined to guard the secrecy of its articles of faith. He thus was forced to rely on unfriendly, and probably inaccurate, outside reports.

An entrancing but ultimately unanswerable question is for whom did Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd write. His own statement is that an unidentified individual asked him to continue Eutychius' history up to the present. It seems reasonable to assume, judging from the pre-eminently Christian character of Eutychius' work, that it was a fellow Melkite Christian who made the request. However, as it stands in its third redaction, his "Continuation" shows no sign of having been written with a Melkite audience in mind. In fact, the emphasis in the chronicle on politics at

the highest level, the minimization of the role of individual personalities, and the aversion to fabulous and anecdotal material, which is the very fabric of popular literature, makes it difficult to deduce for whom he intended his history.

Likewise, we are in the dark in respect to the goals he had when he wrote his "Continuation." We can hypothesize enjoyably that he wrote the first redaction from predominantly Melkite sources to satisfy a Melkite audience. Even if there were firm evidence for this proposition, however, nothing of the supposed original flavor of the work has been transmitted to the third redaction. The essence of that redaction seems to be a desire to set down historical facts in a convenient order and in a format that would not frighten away the general reading public and yet satisfy the author's own integrity and self-conception of his capacities. In the end, it appears that his primary allegiance was to the recording of events, not to any one certain view of them.

The question of what were Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's unconscious prejudices, that is, what would he tacitly accept and what was beyond the limits of his credibility, is naturally more complex than that of his conscious prejudices. This is because evidence of such prejudice is not explicitly stated but is detectable only through close attention to the nuances and omissions of the chronicle,

and, of course, it is impossible to be sure what information he had at his disposal.

To mention his education and his familial relationship to the Patriarch Eutychius is sufficient to show that Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd belonged to the upper stratum of society. When he condemns the Druze for being min al-ra^Ca^C, riffraff, he is voicing the superiority he felt toward general society. Proletarian or popular concerns clearly did not interest him.

Two relatively minor characteristics of the "Continuation" are more important than all others in helping to determine what are its unconscious prejudices. The first has to do with the six documents which Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd included verbatim in his chronicle. These were:

1. - The earliest, a letter from the pen of Agapios, Patriarch of Antioch, written soon after his installation as patriarch, 22 January, 978. In this letter he argued, successfully, against the claim of ʿIlyā, the Patriarch of Alexandria, that such progression in the ecclesiastical hierarchy contradicted the law of the church, and, despite the fact that he was already bishop of Aleppo, that his own nomination to the patriarchate of Antioch should be recognized as valid.⁹³
- 2-4. Three decrees which al-Hākim issued in the final years of his life permitting the reconstruction

of Melkite churches and monasteries and the return of Christian converts to Islam to their original religion under amān, guarantees of protection.⁹⁴

5-6. Arabic translations of the letter which Abgar, the King of Edessa, sent to Jesus Christ and the letter which Christ sent to Abgar in reply. The actual Syriac letters, which were holy relics evoking the most sincere veneration, fell into Byzantine hands when the Strategos of Sumaysāt occupied the city of Edessa in October, 1031.⁹⁵

All six of the documents which Yahyā b. Sa^cīd has chosen to reproduce verbatim pertain to Christians. Of those that are contemporary (that is, excluding the letters of Abgar and Jesus Christ), three of the four have to do particularly with Melkite Christians. Thus, Yahyā b. Sa^cīd saw as relevant to the contents of his history only documents pertaining to Christians, especially to the Melkite community. The decrees of al-Hākīm were important to Egyptian Christians because they documented what was a great victory for them: emergence from a period of severe persecution and trial. Similarly, the inclusion of the texts of the letters of Christ and Abgar betokens the tremendous sense of joy that Christians felt at the recovery of those precious relics.

The second characteristic of his chronicle that deserves mention is the composition of the group of

individuals for whom Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd shows specific respect: they are all, including two or, perhaps, three Byzantine emperors, Christians except for the Jewish convert to Islam, Ya^Cqūb b. Killis.

These two traits of the "Continuation," the citation of only Christian documents and the personal respect and biographical interest shown almost exclusively to Christians, reveals that his primary allegiance was to the Christian faith and the Melkite community.

Conclusion

As a literary genre, the chronicle confers slight prestige on its practitioner. It would be incorrect, if not unfair, to judge the capacities and achievements of Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd al-Antākī by his participation in so lowly and unglamorous a field of literature. The definition of historical writing to which he adhered was a self-effacing one which tends to obscure the solidity of his contribution. His own conservative conviction that an historian ought not to indulge in the interpretation of events or the repetition of gossip stories resulted in a work which is neither as colorful nor as explicit as more famous histories like Miskawayh's Tajārīb al-Umam or Leo Diaconus' History.

The "Continuation" however has several meritorious attributes which make it a valuable repository of information for the historical student of this period. Yahyā

b. Sa^Cīd was resourceful in hunting up sources and critical in their use. Sensing the dubiousness of anecdotal and conjectural accounts, he almost entirely excluded such material from his chronicle. Moreover, he was capable of analyzing a question of sources or a textual problem and arriving at a plausible solution. Indeed, the little of his intellectual composition which shows through the impersonality of the chronicle style hints that his mind was unusually analytic and undominated by tradition. Finally, his belief in the benefits of careful editing has added greatly to the value of his history.

The rewards to be drawn from this combination of technical skills are maximized by Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's lack of an appreciable conscious prejudice. While it may be presumed that he wrote from an upper class and Melkite Christian outlook, this viewpoint does not enter perceptibly into his presentation of historical facts. At times it appears that he was aware that facts themselves, if sufficiently persuasive, can be far more damning than bitter invective and transparent slander.

Only in his discussion of al-Ḥākim does Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd operate as a true historian. In that single instance he was not satisfied to merely recount facts but attempts an interpretation of them. His interpretation, however, may in the end owe its effectiveness to the same quality--a careful and skeptical attitude toward his subject--that makes him a chronicler of the first order.

His chronicle is the only contemporary source to survive in its author's own words for the history of Byzantium and the central Islamic lands, 979-1034. It is also the only firsthand description of al-Ḥākim's reign except for the gullible account found in the History of Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church. In addition, there is no local history dating from the same period for the city of Antioch or, for that matter, for any other city in north Syria.

Therefore, even if Yahyā b. Sa^cīd had been a very mediocre and ordinary chronicler, the "Continuation" would still be important as a major primary source. It is very fortunate, on the other hand, that for this period of history, which is not well documented, one of the chief sources was written by a chronicler with Yahyā b. Sa^cīd's mania for precision and capacity for analyzing historical material. His narrative, while it contains some inaccuracies and, probably, numerous omissions, is as close to an authoritative history of the period as exists. Despite the restrictions of length which Yahyā b. Sa^cīd set for himself, he did a masterly job of synthesizing a disparate group of sources into a cogent and coherent narrative. The product is a valuable source for a wide range of historical topics.

An unusual characteristic of the "Continuation" is its harmonious treatment of both Christian and Muslim

history. In its use of the Muslim era and Muslim sources, its essential conception that history is the transmission of accurate facts, and its interest in Muslim history, it is a Muslim-Arab history. In its general organization, use of Christian and Byzantine sources, attention to the affairs and hardships of Christians living under Muslim rule, its strong interest in the history of Byzantium, and its register of the eastern patriarchs, it is a Christian-Byzantine history.

Being both a Muslim-Arab history and a Christian-Byzantine one, the "Continuation" is in itself an interesting historical relic which illustrates how the two civilizations blended and adapted at the points where they converged. However, that the picture appears so positive as it does in the case of Yahyā b. Sa^cīd al-Anṭākī's continuation of the Nazm al-Jawhar is largely attributable to the author's personal acumen and intellectual energy.

Footnotes

¹The historiographic issues surrounding Yahyā b. Saʿīd's history have never been addressed. While it must be remembered that the study of both Byzantine and Arabic historiography has been neglected, the principal reason that students of historiography have failed to take notice of Yahyā b. Saʿīd al-Antākī is that his chronicle belongs fully neither to the Byzantine nor the the Arab, meaning Muslim Arab, traditions of historywriting. The "Continuation" has been considered briefly in a historiographic light only by Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 069-075. M. Canard has commented on its value for Byzantine history in "Les sources arabes de l'histoire byzantine aux confins des Xe et XIe siècles", REB, 19 (1961), 300-311.

²M. Canard in A. A. Vasiliev, Byzance et les Arabes, II, 2, 91.

³In this chapter I have used "history" to refer to any historical type work unless the distinction is specifically made between chronography and true history, which implies the author's adoption of a critical approach both to materials and to the events he narrates.

⁴Habīb Zayāt, "Vie du patriarche melkite d'Antioche Christophore (d. 967) par le protospathaire Ibrahīm b. Yuhanna Document inédit du Xe siècle", Le Proche Orient Chrétien, II (1952), 2, 14.

⁵Canard, Byzance et les Arabes, II, 2, 80.

⁶M. Hodgson, "Al-Darazī and Hamza in the Origin of the Druze Religion", JAOS, 82, 1962, 18: "Antākī's description of al-Zāhir's advent reads like a restoration of an old regime after a puritan revolution."

⁷Canard, Byzance et les Arabes, II, 2, 89.

⁸See, for instances, Skylitzes, Synopsis, 339, where he has combined events taking place in 1000 and 1022, reversed the direction of Basil II's march from Antioch to Armenia in 1000, and misidentified the Georgian

king, Bagrat III, not Gēorgi I, from whom he received the oath of sovereignty in 1000.

⁹On Skylitzes see Karl Krumbacher, Geschichte der Byzantinischen Literatur von Justinian bis zum Ende des Oströmischen Reiches (527-1453) (Munich, 1891), 138-140; G. Moravcsik, Byzantinoturcica I Die Byzantinischen Quellen der Geschichte der Türkvölker (Budapest, 1942), 190-193; and also the introduction to J. Thurn (ed.), Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum xii-xlvi. On Zonaras, Krumbacher, Geschichte der Byzantinischen Literatur, 141-146, and Moravcsik, Byzantinoturcica, 196-198.

¹⁰On Leo Diaconus see Krumbacher, Geschichte der Byzantinischen Literatur, 72-74, and Moravcsik, Byzantinoturcica, I, 236-238.

¹¹On Psellos see Krumbacher, Geschichte der Byzantinischen Literatur, 174-181; Moravcsik, Byzantinoturcica, 265-266; and the introduction to Michael Psellos (ed. Émile Renaud) Chronographie (Paris, 1926), I, ix-lx.

¹²On Kekaumenos see Moravcsik, Byzantinoturcica, I, 201-202, and especially, P. Lemerle, 'Prolégomènes à une édition critique et commentée des "Conseils et Récits" de Kékauménos', Académie Royale de Belgique, Mémoires, Classe des Lettres, 54 (1960-1961), 1-119; also the introduction to G. Litavrin, Sovečy i Rasskazy Kekavmena (Moscow, 1972), which includes a new edition, translation into Russian, and commentary.

¹³It can be said that the history of the reigns of Basil II, Constantine VIII, and Romanos III Argyros is still waiting to be written. The only scholar who has studied them in depth was the famous French Byzantinist Gustave Schlumberger, whose magisterial three volume history of the Byzantine Empire between 969 and 1057, L'Épopée Byzantine à la fin de Xe siècle (Paris, 1985-1905) is now three-quarters of a century old. While this enormous work marked a great step forward in its time, L'Épopée Byzantine was essentially a brave attempt to set out the brilliant story of the late Macedonian dynasty in a continuous narrative. Schlumberger, who was a prodigiously prolific historian, worked hastily to accomplish the huge task which he had begun. Up to the present the massive facade of Schlumberger's work and the extreme meagerness of the Greek sources have stood as obstacles to the continued investigation of these three reigns. What is needed now is careful history based on a thorough analysis of all the sources and satisfactory to modern standards of scholarship.

¹⁴Yahyā, PO, 8/ 706.

¹⁵E. Gerland, "Die Grundlagen der Byzantinischen Geschichtschreibung", B, 8, 1933, 97, touches on the tradition of Church History in the early Byzantine empire.

¹⁶F. Rosenthal, A History of Muslim Historiography (second edition, Leiden, 1968), 138.

¹⁷Yahyā, PO, 8/706.

¹⁸Nazm al-Jawhar in CSCO, series 3, 7, 69-88, and the "Continuation", 252-273, in the same volume.

¹⁹Yahyā, PO, 49-65/747-763.

²⁰According to the definition of R. J. H. Jenkins, "The Chronology and Accuracy of the "Logothete" for the years A.D. 867-913', DOP, 19 (1965), 91.

²¹On the Seleucid era see V. Grumel, La Chronologie (Paris, 1958), 209-210, where citations to more specialized works are given.

²²Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 081.

²³Yahyā, PO, 71/769, CSCO, 243.

²⁴Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 053-054, citing Yahyā, Ta'riḫ, Bibliotheque Nationale ms. Arabe 291 and the ms. in the Leningrad Public Library (to my knowledge, no catalogue available).

²⁵The basmalah is the name for the sacred Muslim formula b'ism Illāh al-rahmān al-rahīm: In the name of God the Blessed the Merciful. As a rule it is used by Muslims to introduce a piece of writing or a particular section or chapter thereof.

²⁶Yahyā, PO, 273-277/481-485. The fervor of this controversy can be seen from The Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa, trans. A. Dostourian, Ph.D. thesis, Rutgers University, 1972, 48-51. Matthew writes: "In these days a great disturbance took place in the city of Constantino-

ple and in the whole empire of the Greeks, because on the important feast day of Easter, the Greeks had fallen into error concerning the celebration of the holy day of the Resurrection, (that is to say) of Easter. . . The whole Greek nation fell into error concerning Holy Easter, and much affliction fell upon the holy church of Constantinople and especially upon the divinely-established city of Jerusalem, for puffed up with arrogance these Greeks had transferred Easter to the day of Palm Sunday."

²⁷Ibid., 277-278/485-486.

²⁸Consult particularly the appendix to Chapter 2, where passages Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd has taken from Thābit b. Sinān are listed.

²⁹CSCO, 243; for other references see chapter 9, footnote 87.

³⁰CSCO, 243-244; al-Musabbiḥī in Becker, Beiträge zur Geschichte Ägyptens, 80; al-Maqrizi, Itti^Cāz, II, 174. See chapter 9 for a discussion of this embassy.

³¹Yahyā, PO, 10/708.

³²Miskawayh, Tajārib al-Umam, II, 387-389.

³³Yahyā, PO, 191/399.

³⁴Canard, who has noted this confusion, Dynastie des H'amdānides, 845-846, fn. 267, overlooked Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's statement that only the Būyid investment of Amida led Abū Taghlib to flee to Syria. He apparently thought Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd repeated Miskawayh's information.

³⁵Of course, one does not know whether Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd would have followed the same principle if he had been writing a larger historical work. Thus, as far as I can tell, his pattern of avoiding conjectural and sticking to factual statements represents a conception of history. Admittedly, it may have been a means toward finding a middle way between excessive length and unsuitable brevity.

³⁶Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 265-266.

³⁷Yahyā, PO, 227-231/435-439.

³⁸Ibn al-Qalānisi, Dhayl Ta'rīkh Dimashq, 33-39;
Abū Shujā^C al-Rūdhrawārī, Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam, 208-217;
Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, IX, 85-89; Ibn Zāfir, B. M. Or.
3685, 19v-21v.

³⁹Habīb Zayāt, "Vie du patriarche melkite d'Antioche
Christophore (d. 967) par le protospathaire Ibrāhīm b.
Yuhanna Document inédit du Xe siècle", Le Proche Orient
Chrétien, II, 2, 11-38; 333-366.

⁴⁰Yahyā, PO, 10/708.

⁴¹Ibid., 11/709.

⁴²Ibid., 11-12/709-710.

⁴³For the most recent discussion see M. Canard,
"La date des expéditions mésopotamiennes de Jean Tzimiscès",
Mélanges Henri Grégoire, II. Annuaire de l'Institut de
Philologie et d'Hist. orient. et slaves, X, 1960, 99-108,
which includes bibliography.

⁴⁴N. Adontz, "Tornik le Moine", B, 13 (1938), 144-
145, and the discussion in Chapter 7 of this dissertation,
including fn. 42.

⁴⁵See chapter 8 of this dissertation, especially
fn. 9.

⁴⁶See chapter 8 of this dissertation.

⁴⁷Skylitzes, Synopsis, 332-333; Psellos, Chrono-
graphie, 8; PO, 211-213/419-420.

⁴⁸Ibn Shahrām's tadhkira of his embassy to Byzan-
tium in Abū Shujā^C al-Rūdhrawārī, Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam,
29-39; ^CAbd al-^CAzīz b. Yūsuf al-Shirāzī, "Letter concern-
ing the Peace Treaty with the Byzantines", Rasā'il, Ms.
Peterman 406, Ahlwardt 8625, Berlin, 16b-17b, paraphrased

in Bürgel, Die Hofkorrespondenz ^CAdud al-Daulas, 155-156, and the letters of Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm al-Sābī given in M. Canard, "Deux documents Arabes sur Bardas Skleros", Actes du Ve Congrès d'Études Byzantines. Studi Bizantini i Neoellenici, V (Rome, 1939), I, 60-61.

⁴⁹See the discussion of these negotiations in Chapter 7.

⁵⁰Skylitzes, Synopsis, 333-334; Psellos, Chronographie, 7-8.

⁵¹Yahyā, 211-212; see Zakkar, Emirate of Aleppo, 52-54, for criticism of the story of Ṣālih's escape.

⁵²The actual division in the text between what was written in the Egyptian period and what was written later at Antioch appears to come at PO, 300/508 after Yahyā b. Sa^Cid mentioned the vizirate of al-Husayn b. Tāhir al-Wazzān, which ended with his execution 11 Jumādā II, 405/ 6 December, 1014.

⁵³Yahyā b. Sa^Cid's statement, PO, 10/708, that he used his Egyptian sources in two groups, which differed so greatly that he was forced to completely rewrite his chronicle when he came upon the second group, suggests that he originally wrote it from Christian sources in possession of the Melkite community and only later gained access to Muslim sources, which presented a much different picture.

At Antioch he found local Christian sources, from which came the introduction of the Seleucid chronology into his work, and, probably, also copies of actual Byzantine historical works, either written in Greek or translated into Arabic. There is also no reason to doubt that there was a flourishing tradition of local historiography in the towns of North Syria. This may have been an additional group of sources to which he had access.

⁵⁴Rosenthal, History of Muslim Historiography, 81.

⁵⁵G. Wiet, Histoire de la nation Égyptienne, IV, L'Égypte arabe (Paris, 1937), 225.

⁵⁶Yahyā, CSCO, 218.

⁵⁷Ibid., 214.

⁵⁸In contrast to the view of Canard, "Fātimids", EI², "The destruction of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre on the orders of al-Hākīm was probably one of the causes of the breaking off of commercial relations ordered by Basil in 406/1015-1016." However, he mentions no other cause, not even the Fātimid coup in Aleppo. This is clearly a violation of the spirit of the source.

⁵⁹Yahyā, PO, 211, 222/419, 430.

⁶⁰Rosenthal, History of Muslim Historiography, 62.

⁶¹R. J. H. Jenkins, "The Classical Background of the Scriptores Post Theophanem", DOP, 8 (1954), in general.

⁶²Yahyā, PO, 48-49, 58/747-748, 756.

⁶³Ibid., 127-128/825-826.

⁶⁴A comparison of PO, 127-128/825-826 with the necrology of Nicephoros Phocas found in Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī, Mir'āt al-Zamān, Karaçelebizade, 284, in the Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, 128B-129A, indicates a shared source. This must have been Thābit b. Sinān, who was Sibṭ's premier and fundamental source until A.H. 360. In addition, Thābit is explicitly cited at the beginning of the necrology of Nicephoros. Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, VIII, 607, under A.H. 359 also reproduces part of the same passage. All three say that Nicephoros chose the season when the crops were standing ripe in the fields for campaigning; he burnt the harvest, led off numerous captives, and left death and destruction where he passed. There are obvious verbal congruencies in all three examples.

⁶⁵Yahyā, PO, 127-128/825-826.

⁶⁶M. Siuziumov, "Ob Istochnikakh Leva Diakona i Skilitsii", Vizantiiskoe Obozrenie, 2 (1916), 123, has suggested that Yahyā b. Sa^cīd might have shared Leo Diaconus' pro-Phocan source (he also used an anti-Phocan

source). Siuziumov comments: "Like Leo Diaconus, Yahyā does not describe the negative traits of Nicephoros' reign. The opinions of both authors in respect to this emperor are identical. . . Obviously, Yahyā also had a source favorably-disposed to Nicephoros. Whether this was the same as Leo Diaconus' and Skylitzes' common source or the version of the same source reached Yahyā thanks to a second source is unknown. But in any case these details and the trait of their official origin were known to Byzantine historical literature of this time."

⁶⁷Yahyā, CSCO, 248-249.

⁶⁸Ibid., 248-249.

⁶⁹Psellos, Chronographie, 18-24.

⁷⁰Yahyā, CSCO, 272-273.

⁷¹Skylitzes, Synopsis Historiarum, 375-391, and Psellos, Chronographie, 32-52 for the Constantinopolitan view of the reign of Romanos III.

⁷²On the history of the monastery of the Holy Mother of Peribleptos, see R. Janin, Les églises et les monastères de Constantinople (Paris, 1953), 227ff.

⁷³See Chapter 1, the conclusion to Chapter 4, and Chapter 5.

⁷⁴It is the opinion of Yahyā, PO, 226/434, that Ibn Killis converted during the reign of Kāfūr. In this he is followed by M. Canard, "Ibn Killis", EI², III, 840-841, who says that a prospect of the vizirate prompted his conversion. In contrast, Becker, "Ibn Killis", EI, II, 398-399, places his conversion after he entered al-Mu^cizz's service.

⁷⁵Yahyā, PO, 225-226/433-434. However, Yahyā b. Sa^cīd does not mention the dramatic speech which is often attributed to him. According to Yahyā b. Sa^cīd, he was already dead when al-^cAzīz arrived. See Chapter 5, fn. 142.

⁷⁶Ibid., 299-300/507-508.

⁷⁷Ibid., 197-198/405-406.

⁷⁸Ibid., 309/517.

⁷⁹G. E. v. Grunebaum, Medieval Islam (Chicago, 1946), 13.

⁸⁰See Chapter 5 for a discussion of these accusations.

⁸¹Yahyā, PO, 17/715, "wa kāna rajūlān zālīmān kathīrān ma yaṣghia ilā samā^C al-si^Cāyāt wa qabūliha wa yuhliku al-mus^Cā bihi wa 'l-muntasih fīhi wayā'tī^C alayhi.

⁸²Ibid., 10/717.

⁸³Ibid., 20-21/718-719.

⁸⁴Another passage, Ibid., 101-105/799-803, which is comparable to the description of the injustice visited on the Patriarch Eutychius is a story of the tribulations and martyrdom of Yuhannā b. Jamī^C, Patriarch of Jerusalem (353-355/963-966). The Patriarch clashed with the Ikhshīdīd governor Muḥammad b. Ismā^Cīl b. al-Ṣanājī, who is said to have exacted more than the customary courtesy gifts. The governor refused to heed his master Kāfūr, who gave orders to desist from molesting the Patriarch. Finally, a mob, which broke into the Church of the Resurrection and pillaged it, murdered the Patriarch and burned his body. The account includes a statement that Jews did more destruction and plundering than did the Muslims. This tale is probably from an hagiographical source.

⁸⁵F. Rosenthal, the leading authority, writes, "Historians did not intend to 'color' history. . . [They] did not consider themselves justified to change the details of or to reinterpret a transmitted factual report."

"[The historian's] main weapon was his freedom to omit material from his sources or to add material from other sources which must not always have been historical in the proper sense, and this was expected from him." History of Muslim Historiography, 63-64.

⁸⁶On this report itself see Chapter 3, Part 1; on the battle itself Chapter 8 and fn. 61.

⁸⁷Yahyā, PO, 50/748.

⁸⁸Ibid., 49-50/747-748; D. R. W. Bryer, "The Origins of the Druze Religion", Part I, 59 and fn. 43, points out that ^CUbaydallāh is the name given ^CAbdallāh al-Mahdī by hostile historians.

⁸⁹Ibid., 58/756.

⁹⁰Ibid., 58-60/756-758.

⁹¹CSCO, 220.

⁹²Ibid., 224.

⁹³PO, 172-181/380-389.

⁹⁴CSCO, 229-231, 232-233.

⁹⁵Ibid., 263, 264.

PART III

BYZANTINE EASTERN POLICY AND DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS
WITH ARMENIA, GEORGIA, AND THE
ARAB STATES, 976-1025

CHAPTER 7

BYZANTINE EASTERN POLICY, 976-989:

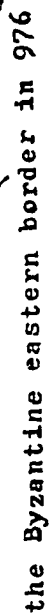
DEFENDING THE THRONE

The death of John Tzimiskes on January 11, 976 brought Basil II and Constantine VIII, the sons of Romanos II and his Empress Theophano, possession of the Byzantine throne. Basil was eighteen years old and his brother sixteen.¹ Nicephoros II Phocas and John Tzimiskes, who had shared successively the title of Emperor with Basil and Constantine, had been great Asian landholders and two of the most distinguished warriors in Byzantine history. Their principal military legacy was a series of vastly successful military campaigns against the Arabs, which had advanced Byzantium's frontier from the Taurus mountains into north Syria. In their victories some have seen the first awakening of Christian crusader zeal.²

Tzimiskes died right after the completion of a Syrian campaign, which allegedly took him as far south as Mt. Tabor in Palestine.³ During this campaign Tzimiskes established a Byzantine outpost at ^CArqa, only twenty-two kilometres from the important port city of Tripoli.⁴ Running east from ^CArqa, the Byzantine-Arab border turned

north at Jūsiyya and ran along the western edge of the territories of Hims̄, Hamā, Shayzar, Apamea (see map) to the Nahr (river) ʿAfrīn.⁵ From Barṣāyā the border went east, passing on the north side of Killiz, to the Nahr al-Sājūr and along its course to the Euphrates.⁶ At Samosata the border crossed to the east bank of the Euphrates and skirted the northern third of the Jazīra, known as the Diyār Bakr.⁷ Encompassing the Armenian province of Taraun, which the emperor Nicephoros Phocas had annexed in 967-968, it ran roughly north toward Theodosiopolis (modern Erzurum), joining the upper course of the Araxes, which dissected the Armenian province of Basean (Greek: Phasianē), everything to the north and west being Byzantine territory.⁸ North of Theodosiopolis was the long-established theme of Chaldia with its capital at Trebizond; it is not known how far to the east it extended at this time. There was also an isolated Byzantine outpost at Soteroupolis, which was east of the mouth of the Chorokh river on the Black Sea; the authority of the strategos of Soteroupolis probably did not reach beyond the walls of the city itself.⁹

In 975 Byzantine territory adjoined Fāṭimid only at the southern tip of the protrusion along the coastal mountain chains. Tripoli was in Fāṭimid hands but Cairo did not yet hold secure possession of Damascus. Byzantium had bound to it the western Hamdānid amirate centered on



the Byzantine eastern border in 976

Aleppo, which Sayf al-Dawla had founded, by a treaty concluded in 359/968-969. Forced on Qarghuwayh, one of Sayf al-Dawla's ghilmān who ruled Aleppo briefly following the death of the amir, it openly proclaimed the subordinate and tributary relationship between the amirate and Byzantium. It is this treaty which describes the Byzantine border in Syria in the 970's.

Ruling at Hims was Sayf al-Dawla's son Sa^Cd al-Dawla Abū al-Ma^Cālī, whom Qarghuwayh had expelled from Aleppo. Abū Taghlib, son of Nāsīr al-Dawla, the founder of the eastern Hamdānid amirate with its capital at Mosul, ruled over Mayyāfāriqīn and the Diyār Bakr and possibly territory as far north as Bitlis at the western tip of Lake Van.¹⁰ It appears that Muslims, possibly the last amir of the Qaysid dynasty, whose capital had been at Manzikert, ruled the towns of Khlat^C (Arabic: Khilāt; Greek: Chliat), Archēsh (Arabic: Arjīsh; Greek: Artzesion). and Berkri (Arabic: Barkirī; Greek: Perkri) on the north side of Lake Van, but it is not definitely known who actually was in control of them from 964 until the rebellion of Skleros, 976-979.¹¹ David of Upper Tao, an Iberian Bagratid who was the most important political figure of his time in Georgia, held the section of Basean south and east of the Araxes. The Armenian-populated territories belonging to David and the Muslim rulers of Lake Van and Apahunik^C (the Armenian province in which Manzikert was

located) in effect isolated the Armenian kingdoms farther east from Byzantium. Armenians also formed a significant, perhaps dominant, portion of the population of the Byzantine lands east of the line Sebastea-Caesarea-Tarsos.¹²

At the beginning of the tenth century Armenia had been united under the suzerainty of a single king of the Bagratid dynasty. In 908 the Artsrunid dynasty seceded to form a separate kingdom in the great southern province of Vaspurakan. In 961 another separate kingdom, Vanand, with its capital at Kars, was established in part of the realm of the Bagratid king of kings. In 970 the process of secession repeated itself in the district of Siuniq in eastern Armenia.

The kingdom of Vaspurakan also underwent feudal division at the time of king Apusahl-Hamazasp's death in 972. The eldest son Ashot-Sahak, as king (972-983), received Vaspurakan proper while the fiefs of Anzevatsik^C and Rshtunik^C, respectively southeast and south of Lake Van, were given to his two brothers.

The legacy of Nicephoros II Phocas and John Tzimiskes was at least twofold: it provided for territorial expansion into Arab--Syrian and Mesopotamian--territory and for the co-rule beside the legitimate emperors of the Macedonian dynasty of a prominent soldier, whose support within the military legitimized the actual conduct by him of the daily affairs of the Byzantine Empire.

Candidates for the mantle of Phocas and Tzimiskes raised two great rebellions which dominated the first fifteen years (976-990) of the reign of Basil II, who quickly showed himself as the stronger of the two young emperors. These rebellions greatly influenced the direction in which relations with the neighboring eastern states and rulers would ultimately develop.

The Rebellion of Bardas Skleros, 976-979

The first of the rebellions was in favor of Bardas Skleros. He was John Tzimiskes' brother-in-law and chief lieutenant. Tzimiskes' death, January 11, 976, placed Skleros precariously at the mercy of the Parakoimomenos Basil Lekapenos. Basil, the illegitimate son of Romanos I Lekapenos, had taken part in the conspiracy to place Tzimiskes on the imperial throne and had been a powerful figure in the palace throughout his reign. After Tzimiskes' death, with the possible exception of Bardas Skleros, he was the most powerful man in the Empire, and, importantly, he was also in Constantinople, the center of the Empire. Basil Lekapenos ordered the demotion of Skleros from the position of stratelatēs with authority over all the military forces in the east to dux of the tagmata in the Mesopotamian theme. According to Yahyā b. Sa^cīd, Skleros was appointed governor of Hanzit and al-Khālidiyyāt, a locality in West Armenia not yet identified.¹³

So far as the sources permit a conclusion, Skleros' motives in rebelling were primarily personal. A very ambitious man, he was suddenly demoted, and his hopes of following Tzimiskes as co-emperor and the actual ruler of the Empire, which had once appeared quite promising, disappeared, very possibly for good. The fact that it was a eunuch, the stratopedarch Peter (sometimes erroneously referred to as Peter Phocas; in fact, he had formerly been in the service of Phocas) who succeeded Skleros in command of all the Byzantine forces in the east, may have been especially painful for him.¹⁴ Possibly it was the usurpation of power by eunuchs, Basil Lekapenos and Peter, that particularly angered the Anatolian military, which, according to the eleventh-century historian and polymath Michael Psellos, joined wholeheartedly in Skleros' cause.¹⁵ For the eunuchs represented a Constantinople-based element of power in the state completely separate from the generals of the famous Anatolian military families.

Skleros' revolt must have begun in or before early May, 976 because Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd relates that on May 28, 976 Theodore, the Melkite patriarch of Antioch, died in Tarsos on his way by boat to Constantinople: "At the beginning of Skleros' rebellion the Emperor Basil had sent to Theodoros, the Patriarch of Antioch, and summoned him to Constantinople and sent him a boat that he might go by sea, and he went although ill..."¹⁶

Skleros' first step was to establish a base camp and secure refuge at Kharput in the Mesopotamian theme. Kharput (Armenian: Kharberd; Arabic: Ḥiṣn Ziyād) was located in a predominantly Armenian-populated district. The Armenian soldiers and population overwhelmingly went over to Skleros. Grigor and Bagrat, the sons of the Prince of Taraun, whom Nicephoros Phocas had despoiled of his lands in 966-967, joined Skleros along with Zaphranik, the prince of Mokka^C. The Armenians were the first, Johannes Skylitzes says, to join the revolt and to salute Skleros as emperor. A great multitude of Orthodox Byzantines, Armenians, and Muslims rallied to Skleros' cause, according to Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd. Skleros also concluded a marriage alliance with Abū Taghlib, the Ḥamdānīd amir of Mosul, who held Mayyāfāriqīn and Amida at this time. Abū Taghlib gave Skleros three hundred horsemen and a large amount of money.¹⁷

In the summer of 976 Skleros began the march to Constantinople. From Kharput he went to Melitene (Arabic: Malatya) where he seized the financial officer (bāsālīq) of the city, from whom he extracted six qintārs of gold--42,000 gold pieces in all.¹⁸ Skleros found ready support among Melitene's ethnically and religiously heterogeneous population. It was only after he had reached Melitene that Skleros proclaimed himself emperor, according to Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd.¹⁹

The first counter-action Basil Lekapenos took was to order Michael Burtzes, the commander at Antioch, to join the governor of Tarsos, who is identified only as a member of the Maleinos family. He was almost certainly Eustathios Maleinos. Burtzes found it particularly difficult to decide which side to support in the rebellion. One of the original conquerors of Antioch, he had joined Tzimiskes in the murder of Nicephoros Phocas and had been one of Skleros' companions when the latter was stratelatēs. At the same time that he demoted Skleros, the Parakoimomenos, holding Burtzes in particular suspicion, had commissioned him magister and appointed him dux at Antioch in order to separate him from Skleros.

Skleros chose to take the southern route toward Constantinople. In the Armenian district of Jayhān, which bordered on the district of Melitene, Skleros first clashed with Maleinos and Burtzes.²⁰ In defeat Maleinos fled to his estate in Cappadocia while Burtzes fell back to a fortress he possessed in the Anatolikon theme.²¹

Skleros continued his progress toward Cappadocian Caesarea. At the pass of Koukou Lithos (the location is unidentified) Eustathios Maleinos defeated a scouting party preceding Skleros' main force.²² As the imperial forces were closely watching the Taurus passes through which they judged the rebels must pass, Skleros procrastinated before crossing the Taurus mountains until an Armenian, Sahakios Vrahamios, one of the co-conspirators in the

plot against Nicephoros Phocas, convinced him to push on toward Caesarea.²³ An inferior force in a commanding position could annihilate a much larger force in one of these defiles. In three days' time Skleros' army arrived at Lapara, a locality better known under the name Lykandos, not far from Tzamandos. Meanwhile, the stratopedarchos and trapezitos Peter, commander of all the loyal imperial forces in the east, having joined Eustathios Maleinos with a large army, marched by night to take up positions opposite Skleros' forces, but both sides were loathe to rush into battle. Finally, Skleros put the loyal forces to flight by means of a stratagem. Skylitzes tells how one morning the rebels conspicuously prepared their morning meal. Then, at a pre-arranged signal, Skleros' men attacked. The loyal troops, although unsuspecting, nevertheless were able to resist for some time until Skleros succeeded in outflanking them with a force of mercenary soldiers. Allegedly, the first to flee was Burtzes, the Dux of Antioch, although Skylitzes does not know whether he acted out of cowardice or wickedness. Both motives were rumored.²⁴

Neither Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd nor Skylitzes dates the great battle at Lapara-Lykandos. Schlumberger rejects a date in the second half of 977, preferring instead autumn, 976.²⁵ Probably the true date is somewhere between these two.

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd says that Skleros then besieged Burtzes on his own lands in the Anatolikon theme. This action must have followed the victory of Lykandos and the subsequent occupation of Tzamandos and Caesarea, which would have opened the route to the Anatolikon theme to Skleros. Burtzes had already notified his eldest son, whom he had left as his deputy at Antioch, to turn the city over to the Basilikos Kulayb and go to join his father. It was a precaution Burtzes took in order to remain uninvolved in the rebellion. But to no avail; he was drawn into the rebellion when Skleros took him prisoner. Kulayb later surrendered Antioch to Skleros' representatives and was himself posted to serve as basilikos at Melitene.²⁶

Meanwhile, Skleros had also gained control of the Cibyrrhaeot fleet based at Antalya, through a mutiny in favor of Manuel Kourtikios, whom he had sent to seize the fleet.²⁷

At this point, with a great part of Anatolia already in Skleros' hands, the deteriorating situation called for new and drastic measures on the part of the Parakoimomenos and the young co-emperors. The Emperor's protovestiarios Leo was sent out from Constantinople with quasi-tyrannical powers, enabling him to promote defectors from the rebel ranks and reward them financially. He could do all that an emperor could do, without worrying about exceeding his power.

Leo joined forces with the Stratopedarchos Peter at Kotuaeion (modern Kütahya) in Phrygia while Skleros was at the imperial estate of Mesanakta at Dipotamos, located by the Lake of the Forty Martyrs (the modern Aksehir Gölü). Skleros was apparently following a westward route from Caesarea via Philomelion toward Kotuaeion, which blocked the route to Constantinople.²⁸

Leo's efforts to woo away Skleros' followers led to nothing, and in despair Leo set out from Kotuaeion toward the east, bypassing Skleros' forces by night. So unexpected an action threw confusion into the rebel ranks. To quell the fears that rose among his adherents for the relatives they had left in the east, Skleros sent Michael Burtzes and Romanos Taronites after Leo to neutralize his force but with orders to refrain from battle as far as that was possible.²⁹

The unexpected passage of a caravan taking the annual tribute from the Hamdānīd amirate of Aleppo to Constantinople forced Burtzes to disregard his orders. With the caravan as a prize the Protoprovestiarios Leo and Burtzes clashed near the fortress of Oxylithos. The loyal troops under Leo gained a complete victory. Burtzes lost many of his soldiers, especially Armenians, whom the loyalists killed when they took them prisoner on the grounds that the Armenians were believed to have been the first to revolt.³⁰ Shortly afterwards Skleros regained the

initiative in a battle at Rageas (the location of which is unidentified). The Protoprovestiarios Leo was taken prisoner, and the Stratopedarchos Peter may have been killed there.³¹

At approximately the same time, however, the victory off Abydos of a fleet commanded by Theodore Karantenos over the Cibyrrhaeot fleet, which had previously defected to Skleros, relieved Constantinople from the threat of simultaneous land and sea attacks.³²

Skleros followed up his victory at Rageas by investing and laying siege to Nicaea. As time passed, Skleros became increasingly more anxious to gain possession of Nicaea and to continue on to Constantinople. Therefore, he allowed the garrison with its commander Manuel Erotikos and the Nicaean population to withdraw in safety from the city to Constantinople, where they would increase the number of mouths to be fed during the eventual siege.³³

In Constantinople, the Parakoimomenos, having exhausted every possible alternative course of action, recalled Bardas Phocas from the isle of Chios where he had passed seven years in exile after the rebellion he had inspired against John Tzimiskes, and also the Parakoimomenos, was suppressed in 970. That Basil Lekapenos waited until so late to call on Phocas testifies to the depth of the fears and suspicions he felt toward the house of Phocas. Since Yahyā b. Sa^cīd says that his

recall took place in the second year of the revolt, it must have been ordered before May, 978.³⁴ Phocas was appointed magister and domestic of the schools.

At this point, Skleros' fortunes had reached their apex. His troops had occupied Abydos and the Asiatic shore of the Hellespont and were poised for the attack on the capital. According to Psellos, all the imperial infantry forces had gone over to Skleros. The Armenian Asolik says that the imperial forces relied on the troops of Byzantium (Constantinople), Thrace, Macedonia, and of all the western nations. Apparently, Bardas Skleros had drawn to himself almost all the Asiatic troops of the empire. Among these, Armenians must have formed a very significant part, but the assertion of N. Adontz that Skleros' army was composed almost exclusively of Armenians is pure exaggeration.³⁵

Skleros prevented Bardas Phocas from crossing to Asia in the vicinity of the Hellespont. Instead, Phocas was forced to go by boat from Constantinople to a point on the Black Sea coast of Anatolia. From there he made his way to Caesarea in Cappadocia, where the Phocas family had its lands and enjoyed enthusiastic indigenous support. In Caesarea Michael Burtzes, who had returned to the cause of the Parakoimomenos and the young emperors, and Eustathios Maleinos joined Phocas.

There are only two authors--Johannes Skylitzes and Yahyā b. Sa^cīd--who recount in detail the rebellion of Bardas Skleros. Their accounts, although contradictory on many points, can be reconciled to form a coherent narrative of Skleros' march toward Constantinople. Each author makes significant omissions which the other brings to light. Yahyā, for instance, ignores Skleros' progress from the time of his occupation of Tzamandos until the appointment of Bardas Phocas as domestic.

Thereafter in their accounts of Skleros' maneuverings with Phocas, the stories of Yahyā and Skylitzes, while not irreconcilable, differ over one point of great significance for subsequent Byzantine-Caucasian relations--whether two or three principal battles were fought between Skleros and Phocas.

Skylitzes believes that three battles took place before the rebel movement was quelled. The first of these took place at Amorion to which Skleros had been drawn by Phocas' invasion of his eastern base areas. Skleros managed to defeat Phocas but failed to destroy his army which withdrew in orderly fashion to the Charsianon theme. In the course of the retreat Bardas Phocas, who was accompanying the rearguard, was the victor in single combat with a certain Constantine Gabras.

Skleros followed Phocas to a place which Skylitzes calls Basilika Therma, probably in the Charsianon theme. Here again Skleros routed Phocas' troops.

Phocas now, according to Skylitzes, went to David, the ruler of the Iberians, to request aid. There already existed a longstanding friendship between Bardas Phocas and David, dating from the time when Phocas had been dux of the Chaldean theme, which bordered on Georgia. David gave Phocas "not a small army," which he then added to the rebel forces that had been regrouped after the defeat at Basilika Therma. The armies of Skleros and Phocas met for the third and final time on the broad plain of Pankaleia by the Halys river where Skleros was camped. Phocas saw his troops slowly being pushed back. Suddenly risking everything for victory, he rode through the opposing phalanxes directly at Bardas Skleros himself. The troops stepped aside, happily allowing their generals to settle the matter by themselves. Skleros, although badly wounded, managed to flee. His rebellion, however was broken.³⁶ This in short is Skylitzes' description of Bardas Skleros' rebellion.

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's information is much less detailed than Skylitzes'. In contrast to Skylitzes, he mentions only two battles between Phocas and Skleros. The first, which Yahyā places at Pankaleia (B.n.kāliyyā), 10 Dhū al-Qa^Cda, 367/June 19, 978, Skleros won, although both sides suffered a great many casualties. Yahyā says the second battle began on a Friday and ended on Sunday, 21 Sha^Cban, 368/March 24, 979. Yahyā does not say where

this battle, which put an end to Skleros' rebellion, took place.³⁷

Therefore, according to Yahyā b. Sa^cīd, Pankaleia was the first battle between Skleros and Phocas, not the final one as Skylitzes says. Leo Diaconus' brief account of the revolt is useful in explaining this contradiction. Leo, like Yahyā, places the first battle at Pankaleia, which he calls a plain "suitable for horses" (hippēlatos), the same term by which Skylitzes describes it. Leo, however, rather than locating Pankaleia by the Halys, says that in fact it was near Amorion.³⁸ Therefore, as N. Adontz has shown, Skylitzes' battle of Amorion must be identified with the battle Yahyā and Leo Diaconus call that of Pankaleia; Yahyā says it took place, June 19, 978.³⁹ Skylitzes has erroneously located Pankaleia near the Halys; in all likelihood Pankaleia was the first battle between Skleros and Phocas fought near Amorion.

What then of the battles which Skylitzes says followed at Basilika Therma and again at Pankaleia? An extraneous source provides a possible answer. It is an inscription in the Georgian monastery of Zarzma, fifteen kilometres east of Akhaltzikhē in southern Georgia.⁴⁰ It reads:

In the name of God, with the intercession of the Holy Mother of God, I, John, the son of Sula, have built this chapel. In the time when in Greece Skleros rebelled, the Curopolates David--may God exalt him--helped the Holy

Emperor and sent us all on campaign. We forced Skleros to flee. In that country, which is called Charsanani in a place called Sarvenisni, there stands the throne.

Sarvenisni has been identified with Aquae Saravenae, a hot springs thought to be identical to Basilika Therma, the site of Skylitzes' second battle.⁴¹ Charsanani, of course, is the Charsianon theme, to which, Skylitzes says, Phocas withdrew after his first defeat. However, if the authenticity of the Zarzma inscription is accepted, it eliminates the occurrence of a second battle at Pankaleia or of a third battle in general. In Skylitzes' version the third battle was dominated by a quasi-legendary clash between two epic heroes. Professedly the single combat between Skleros and Phocas decided the rebellion's outcome.⁴²

The deficiency of Skylitzes' account is that it fails to explain why Skleros, with his army still intact, felt compelled to flee to the territory of Mayyāfāriqīn and seek protection from the Būyid amir ʿAdud al-Dawla, who had recently seized the city along with the rest of the territories belonging to Abū Taghlib. In contrast the imperial army had survived several shattering defeats without dissolving. The Homeric ending which Skylitzes gives to what had been a prolonged, bitterly-contested civil war, setting village against village (according to the testimony of Asolik), is unsatisfactory. The interests of too many were involved too deeply for the result to

be decided in a single combat between two champions. Undoubtedly, reality was less gratifying to Skylitzes' literary taste than the fabulous story he tells. Therefore, the final battle at Pankaleia must be regarded as merely a stage for the denouement, a figment of Skylitzes' imagination.

When Skleros' rebellion broke out, there was a Georgian monk, a certain Tornik, residing at the monastery of the Lavra on Mt. Athos where he had taken the name John. According to the Georgian hagiography of saints John and Euthymius, Tornik was summoned from the Lavra to Constantinople. There the Parakoimomenos and the Empress mother Theophano requested Tornik to undertake a mission to seek aid from the Magister David, the ruler of Upper Tao.⁴³ The Armenian Asolik confirms the statement of the hagiography, but Skylitzes says that the appeal for aid came not from Constantinople but from David's old friend, Bardas Phocas. However, there is no reason why both stories cannot be accurate.⁴⁴

The hagiography continues: "Then the Emperors ceded the upper land of Greek speech to the Curopolates that he might keep it until the end of his own lifetime."⁴⁵ Asolik enumerates the territories in question: Khaltoyarich Kleisurawn, Ch'ormayri, Theodosiopolis (Armenian: Karin), Basean, the fortress of Sevuk in Mardali, and the districts of Hark^C and Apahunik^C. In

reality, the Byzantines did not control all these territories. They had previously recognized David's suzerainty over the part of Basean east of the Araxes.⁴⁶ It is not known exactly who ruled Hark^C and Apahunik^C in 978; probably they were still under Muslim domination. The Qaysid amirs had formerly paid tribute to Byzantium, and, as nominal rulers, the Byzantines could justify offering Hark^C and Apahunik^C to David. It cannot be assumed that any of the territories or strongpoints named other than eastern Basean, which belonged to David, Hark^C and Apahunik^C were not in Byzantine hands in 978.⁴⁷

These concessions to David of Upper Tao were by no means unwanted or insignificant. Constantine Porphyrogenitos describes the eager covetousness that the Iberians had displayed in the past in regard to Theodosiopolis and western Basean. The Byzantines had recaptured Theodosiopolis from the Arabs in 949, approximately three years before Constantine wrote. As Iberians had taken no part in its conquest, Constantine declares that the city should remain in Byzantine possession and that the Araxes river should be maintained as the boundary between Byzantine and Iberian territory. With this and nothing more, Constantine says, the curopalates, at that time Ashot II (923-954), must be satisfied.⁴⁸

Theodosiopolis commanded a crucial strategic position. The main military and commercial road from Iran

to Anatolia passed through Theodosiopolis, which is located in a valley connecting the course of the upper Euphrates with that of the Olthisi, a tributary of the Chorokh river. The city's position, which dominated Armenia and Iberia, was of critical value for the defense of the eastern regions of the Byzantine empire. For example, when five centuries earlier the Emperor Justinian had fortified the eastern provinces against the Persians after annexing most of Armenia, he made Theodosiopolis the northern anchor point for the first line of defensive fortifications.⁴⁹

Hark^C and Apahunik^C also were significant strategically. The cities of Khlat^C, Archēsh, and Berkri on the north shore of Lake Van, Constantine Porphyrogenitos points out, formed a barrier against an invader coming from the east and as stopping points (aplikta) for an army marching east. Among these militarily important cities were also Manzikert, the capital of the district of Apahunik^C, and Altzike on Lake Van. Constantine Porphyrogenitos views Hark^C and Apahunik^C as valuable provinces. Although ruled by Muslims, they were actually the Emperor's property, he claims.⁵⁰ The other places in question, Khaltoyarich Kleisurawn, Ch'ormayri, and Sevuk, are obscure. In all likelihood, they were fortresses or strategic points of unusual importance.

In the throes of rebellion and defeat the Byzantine Emperor was offering these prized territories to David

of Upper Tao but only, according to the Georgian hagiography, for the duration of David's lifetime. Scholars generally believe that David promised when he intervened in the Byzantine civil war in 978-979 to retrocede these lands at his death.⁵¹ This is not necessarily the case. It is quite possible in the author's opinion that this was simply a conditional grant of land. Under normal conditions, the lands included in this conditional grant to David could well have been intended to pass to David's heir, contingent upon permission of the Emperor. The advantage of this arrangement would have been that it allowed Constantinople to circumvent the traditional Byzantine ideological tenet which forbade the voluntary alienation of imperial territory.

The Iberians had hungrily eyed Theodosiopolis and Basean west of the Araxes from the time of Leo VI (886-912), who, Constantine Porphyrogenitos said, was unwilling under any circumstances to recognize the Iberians' "absolute sovereignty and lordship," but would accept a conditional Iberian administration of Basean if help were forthcoming against the Arab amirs who ruled the province at that time. Constantine Porphyrogenitos advocated that absolute Iberian sovereignty be recognized only over what the Iberians themselves had wrested from the Arabs.⁵²

Thus, the Parakoimomenos and Basil II in soliciting David of Upper Tao's aid probably held out for recognition

of the distinction which the Byzantines had traditionally advanced: no matter who ruled in Theodosiopolis and west of the Araxes, final sovereignty must remain with Constantinople.

The Duke of Upper Tao, however, was in a particularly strong bargaining position vis-à-vis Byzantium. He was one of the last potential sources of salvation left to Basil Lekapenos' beleaguered regime.⁵³ Moreover, David would expose himself to extreme risks by intervening in the Byzantine civil war: no Byzantine commander or army had yet demonstrated that Skleros could be defeated. If David were to intervene in favor of the young emperors and Skleros should, nevertheless, be successful in making himself master of the Empire, David could expect to be the target of extensive and damaging reprisals. In this situation the incentives offered to David perforce had to be great. He would not have accepted a purely nominal cession of lands already in his possession or held by Arab rulers from whom he would have to take them if upon his death they were then to become automatically Byzantine property.⁵⁴ Thus, it appears that the Byzantines continued to maintain ultimate sovereignty over the lands ceded to David, but that he held the right to bequeath actual possession and government of them to his heirs.

The concessions Basil Lekapenos made to David were richly repaid. The 12,000 picked troops whom David sent

under the command of the monk Tornik and the prince of princes Djodjik proved to be the deciding factor in the rebellion's outcome. March 24, 979 at Basilika Therma Bardas Phocas and his recently-acquired Iberian allies administered a defeat so staggering to Skleros's army that the rebel fled from Byzantine territory to P^Cshap^Cshat in the environs of Būyid-ruled Mayyāfāriqīn. After convulsing the Empire for almost three years, Skleros' rebellion was shattered.⁵⁵ With the help of David of Upper Tao's crack contingent of Georgian troops it was possible for Bardas Phocas to break the force of the rebellion.⁵⁶

Byzantine-Būyid Diplomacy, 980-986

Due to the confusion and social turbulence during the civil war, 976-979, the great changes taking place simultaneously in the Arab lands across Byzantium's southeastern border went unnoticed at Constantinople until Skleros' flight drew attention to them. The battle at Qaṣr al-Jaṣṣ, located on the opposite side of the Tigris river from Samarra, 17 Shawwāl, 367/May 28, 978, decided the intrafamilial struggle between two cousins of the Būyid dynasty ʿIzz al-Dawla Bakhtiyār and ʿAdud al-Dawla for the control of Iraq in favor of the latter. On the losing side was Abū Taghlib b. Nāṣir al-Dawla, the Ḥamdānid amir of Mosul. ʿAdud al-Dawla followed up his victory over Bakhtiyār by occupying Mosul, 12 Dhū al-Qaʿda, 367/June 12, 978. From Mosul Abū Taghlib fled to

Bitlis at the southwest corner of Lake Van and then to Skleros' basecamp at Kharpūt (Ḥiṣn Ziyād), arriving there sometime before the battle of Basilika Therma took place.

Previously, Abū Taghlib had concluded a marriage alliance with Skleros and supplied him with a detachment of troops. Abū Taghlib again resisted Skleros' request to aid him in person but sent another detachment to his assistance. When Skleros was decisively defeated, Abū Taghlib fled to Amida (the modern city of Diyarbakir). Mayyāfāriqīn (Martyropolis), the other major city of the Jazīra, had already fallen to the advancing troops of the Būyid ʿAdud al-Dawla soon after 2 Jumādā I, 368/December 6, 978.⁵⁷ When the Būyids began investing Amida, Abū Taghlib fled toward Rahba on the Euphrates and then through the desert to Damascus in order to avoid the Ḥamdānid amirate of Aleppo, the amir of which had justifiably hostile feelings toward Abū Taghlib. Amida fell to the Būyids before the end of the Muslim year, that is, before July 28, 979.⁵⁸ As a result of ʿAdud al-Dawla's victories, the Arab territories on the Byzantine southeastern border as far west as Rahba came into the hands of the energetic young Būyid dynasty at Baghdad, which had put an end to the secular political aspect of the ʿAbbāsīd Caliphate's power. Baghdad had last directly ruled these same territories almost a half century earlier before the formation of the Ḥamdānid amirates of Aleppo and Mosul.

Meanwhile, Aleppo, the main city of north Syria, had also changed hands. Sayf al-Dawla, the original amir of Aleppo, had died 24 Šafar, 356/February 8, 967. One of his ghilmān, Qarghuwayh, evicted Abū al-Ma^Cālī, Sayf al-Dawla's son and rightful heir, from Aleppo and then negotiated a treaty with the Byzantines which placed the amirate of Aleppo in the status of a Byzantine protectorate. It stipulated that the poll or land tax (jizya) of Aleppo and all its dependencies--700,000 dirhams--be turned over to Byzantium, which in return undertook to recognize Qarghuwayh as the rightful ruler of Aleppo and his henchman Bakjūr as his only legitimate successor.⁵⁹ Thus, in effect, the Byzantines were guaranteeing the usurpation of the Hamdānid prince's rights by Qarghuwayh and Bakjūr. At the same time Abū Taghlib, the Amir of Mosul, had annexed Mayyāfāriqīn and Amida; both cities had been included in Sayf al-Dawla's state and were part of the rightful heritage of Abū al-Dawla's state and were part of the rightful heritage of Abū al-Ma^Cālī, Abū Taghlib's cousin.

Sometime in 361-362/971-973 Bakjūr, having decided to expedite his succession to Qarghuwayh, overthrew him.⁶⁰ At the same time Abū al-Ma^Cālī's name was still mentioned in the khutba at Aleppo while he ruled the southern portion of the amirate from his capital at Hims in central Syria. This was part of an agreement with Bakjūr that

included contributions by Abū al-Ma^Cālī to the annual payments to Byzantium. Presumably, Byzantine protection extended also to Hims.

Skleros' rebellion temporarily neutralized Byzantine influence on events in Syria and gave Abū al-Ma^Cālī the opportunity to overthrow Bakjūr. In Rabī^C II, 367/November 16-December 15, 977 Abū al-Ma^Cālī recovered his inheritance.

According to Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd, after retaking Aleppo Abū al-Ma^Cālī sent an ambassador to Baghdad to assure ^CAdud al-Dawla of his obedience. Abū al-Ma^Cālī received the honorific (laqab) Sa^Cd al-Dawla upon the return of the embassy in Sha^Cbān, 368/March, 979. Thereafter, the khutba in Aleppo was given in the name of al-Tā'i^C, the ^CAbbāsīd caliph, and ^CAdud al-Dawla. The sense of Yahya's statement seems to be that formerly the khutba was given in Aleppo and probably also at Hims to the Fātimīd caliph, whose influence was more effective than that of the ruler of Iraq until ^CAdud al-Dawla supplanted Bakhtiyār and extended the political domination of Baghdad to the Jazīra.⁶¹ It appears that the religious supremacy of the Fātimīds may have been recognized at Aleppo as early as 969 or 970 in connection with the conquest of Cairo by the Fātimīds, 17 Sha^Cbān, 358/July 6, 969.⁶²

Abū al-Ma^Cālī was eager to gain possession of the Diyār Mudar, the western third of the Jazīra, which lay

closest to Aleppo. In 368/978-979 he failed in an attempt to seize it by force. However, ^CAdud al-Dawla was willing to cede it to him in exchange for his good will, retaining possession of only the important Euphrates river towns of Raḥba and Raqqa.⁶³

The cession of the Diyar Mudar indicates the significance with which ^CAdud al-Dawla viewed friendly relations with Aleppo. Miskawayh offers an explanation in his history of events in 369/978-979. "When...^CAdud al-Dawla was free of his greatest enemies, had done away with Bakhtiyār and Abū Taghlib, occupied their lands and taken command of their men, and established himself in Baghdad, the struggle for Egypt especially became precious to him and after that for the lands of the unbelievers of Byzantium."⁶⁴ Thus, according to Miskawayh, who was an eyewitness at ^CAdud al-Dawla's court, the hope of reconquering Egypt took precedence among his ambitions even over the reconquest of the territories which had fallen under Byzantine control. Aleppo because of its geographic location necessarily would play a central strategic part in any attempt to bring Egypt militarily back under Baghdad's hegemony.

At this time the Fāṭimids were on the defensive in Syria. Although they had managed to recover control of Damascus from the Turk AlpTekīn, who had tried to make himself an independent amir thereby taking advantage of

indigencus Damascan longings for autonomy between 364 and 368/975-978, the city remained under the control of a local figure, Qassām, until early 373/983.

The Fāṭimids' unreliable Arab vassals, the Banū al-Jarrāh, the dominant subtribe of the Banū al-Tā'ī, constantly threatened to throw off the Fāṭimid hold over Palestine. A coin, ostensibly minted in Palestine in 371/980-981, which bears the legend al-Mālik ʿAdud al-Dawla wa Tāj al-Milla Abū Shujāʿ, testifies to the seriousness of ʿAdud al-Dawla's aggressive intentions toward Egypt.⁶⁵

By assuring the Fāṭimid caliph al-ʿAzīz (365-386/975-996) that he would close the gates of the city before ʿAdud al-Dawla and oppose the Būyids if they should attack Damascus, Qassām obtained the withdrawal of a Fāṭimid army which besieged the city in 369/979-980. According to Ibn al-Qalānisi, al-ʿAzīz was very apprehensive concerning ʿAdud al-Dawla's intentions to send armies toward Egypt.⁶⁶

Nevertheless, there were diplomatic contacts between Cairo and Baghdad in 369/979-980 and perhaps in 370/980-981. These focused principally on two issues: the veracity of Fāṭimid claims to be descended from Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl b. Jaʿfar al-Sādiq and the activities of Fāṭimid missionaries in Iraq.⁶⁷ It appears, however, that ʿAdud al-Dawla was not as sincerely interested in

the successful conclusion of negotiations with al-^CAzīz-- although it may have been ^CAdud al-Dawla who first sought to make diplomatic contact--as he was in furnishing himself with a pretext for undertaking hostilities. When al-^CAzīz summoned ^CAdud al-Dawla to renew the Holy War (jihād) against the Byzantines in cooperation with him, ^CAdud al-Dawla made his participation dependent on a successful outcome to the negotiations. In any case, it is evident that solution of the existing differences was unlikely and by 371/981-982 attempts at a diplomatic settlement had collapsed.⁶⁸

Thus, the Būyid-Fāṭimid rivalry was of primary importance for ^CAdud al-Dawla. His appetite for conquest was directed first of all toward the west, toward Syria and Egypt, in which control of the amirate of Aleppo would be significant, and only thereafter toward Byzantium.

During Skleros' rebellion, Bād b. Dūstuk, a Kurd, had founded a petty state in the region the former Qaysid amirate had occupied in southern Armenia. Asolik records that Bād, the amir of Khlat^C and Nphrkert (Mayyāfāriqīn), rebuilt the town of Manzikert (destroyed by Nicephoros Phocas in A.D. 968-969) during the period of Byzantine civil hostilities. Bād also depopulated the province of Taraun and sacked its main center at Mush.⁶⁹ He apparently did not support Skleros for soon after the suppression of the rebellion Bād was on good terms with Constantinople.⁷⁰

The nucleus of Bād's territory was the western end and northwestern shore of Lake Van and the province of Apahunik^C. Exactly when Bād took possession of Khlat^C is unknown; possibly it was prior to Skleros' rebellion. However, he did not add Mayyāfāriqīn to his state until several years later. Bād's ambition to carve out an enlarged principality in the Byzantine-Arab border region made him an important figure on the frontier for the next decade.

After his defeat at Pankaleia, March 24, 979, Skleros did not immediately flee to Mayyāfāriqīn. The presence there of Skleros and his brother Constantine and son Romanos, who accompanied him, is first remarked in A.H. 369/July 29, 979-July 16, 980. In the same year Constantine Skleros arrived in Baghdad to beg ^CAdud al-Dawla for aid that would enable Skleros and his partisans to resume their rebellion.⁷¹

Alerted by letters from the domestic Bardas Phocas that Skleros had fled to Būyid territory, Constantinople sent an ambassador to counter Skleros' influence with ^CAdud al-Dawla and obtain the surrender of Skleros and his followers before they could launch a new campaign. The identity of the Byzantine ambassador is not established. The Byzantine authors Skylitzes and Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd believe that it was Nicephoros Uranos, but they appear to have confused this embassy with that which Uranos made to Baghdad in 371/980-981.⁷²

Yahyā says that the Byzantine ambassador was empowered to offer the surrender of all the Muslim prisoners held in the Byzantine empire and large sums of money to secure the person of Skleros, who, however, would receive a guarantee of personal security along with his relatives and followers. Both Constantine Skleros and the ambassador from Constantinople were kept waiting at Baghdad through the end of A.H. 369 (=July 16, 980).⁷³ Having realized Skleros' usefulness as a bargaining pawn, in the following year ʿAdud al-Dawla ordered his wālī at Mayyāfāriqīn to take Skleros into custody with his three hundred followers and send them all to Baghdad. In the meantime, ʿAdud al-Dawla, pretending that the wālī al-Tamīmī had taken this action on his own initiative, made a public display of wrath against him.⁷⁴ At Baghdad Skleros was lodged in a palace and maintained handsomely, but at the same time watched and prevented from moving about freely. The Būyids continued to encourage his hopes of receiving an army with which to invade Byzantium.

The Byzantine ambassador returned to Constantinople, unsuccessful in obtaining the surrender of Skleros, together with a legate from ʿAdud al-Dawla, the Ashʿarite theologian Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. al-Tayyib al-Baqillānī (d. 403/1013), who was better known as Ibn al-Baqillānī. The errand of the Būyid ambassador was to pass on a counteroffer, the exact details of which are unknown. It

can be taken for granted, however, that ʿAdud al-Dawla considered the original Byzantine quid pro quo offered for the surrender of Skleros--the release of all Muslim prisoners in Byzantine territory--as only part of an eventual agreement. Perhaps, his demands were similar or identical to those which another Būyid ambassador, Abū Ishāq Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Shahrām, was to make in the following year and which are recorded in Ibn Shahrām's extant report (tadhkira) to ʿAdud al-Dawla. Incorporated into an eleventh century chronicle, his report is the most informative source concerning the negotiations between ʿAdud al-Dawla and the Byzantine court.⁷⁵

Ibn Shahrām's report indicates that the points on which ʿAdud al-Dawla wished satisfaction from Constantinople included: a) the surrender of some fortresses in the Diyār Bakr, which had formerly been the property of Abū Taghlib b. Nāṣir al-Dawla and which the Byzantines had grabbed while mopping up the remnants of Skleros' rebellion; b) the surrender of other fortresses, also located in the Diyār Bakr, but which had come into Byzantine possession during the reigns of Nicephoros Phocas and John Tzimiskes; c) some agreement concerning the status of the Kurd Bād b. Dūstuk, who, having established a base of power around Lake Van, was eager to slice off part of the Diyār Bakr for himself; d) the allegiance of the Ḥamdānīd amirate of Aleppo, including the city of Hims,

which recognized both the religious superiority of the ^CAbbāsīd caliph and the political ascendancy of ^CAdud al-Dawla in the khutba, but was bound by treaty to pay a large sum each year to Constantinople.⁷⁶

As far as is known, the Byzantines agreed to meet only one of the demands presented by Ibn al-Baqillānī: the return of the fortresses in Diyār Bakr taken during the suppression of Skleros' revolt.⁷⁷ Of course, it is highly possible that Ibn al-Baqillānī did not raise all four issues and that the number of demands mentioned by Ibn Shahrām represents an increase in ^CAdud al-Dawla's aspirations once he had fully realized Skleros' potential value as a pawn in the negotiations.

At any rate Ibn al-Baqillānī did not receive a completely satisfactory answer, and it was this which made necessary the dispatch of an ambassador from Constantinople to Baghdad in 370/980-981. It is impossible to connect the Arabic form of the ambassador's name, Ibn Qūnus, with any known figure at the Byzantine court at that time.

Ibn Qūnus doubtlessly carried with him an offer to meet a reduced version of the demands made upon the Byzantines by Ibn al-Baqillānī. It also appears that his primary objective was to obtain the surrender of Skleros himself from the Būyids.⁷⁸ It seems, however, that there was some discrepancy between what Ibn Qūnus thought the

Būyids were agreed to and the concessions that they were actually willing to make.⁷⁹

On his return journey to Constantinople Ibn Qūnus was accompanied by Ibn Shahrām. The memoir he wrote concerning this mission gives a fascinating glimpse into the intrigues of the Byzantine court in the last years of the Parakoimomenos' tutelage of the Emperor Basil II, who was in his middle or late twenties by this time. In it Ibn Shahrām proudly explains how he exploited the jealousies and rivalries of the various factions and candidates for power in Constantinople in order to obtain all of ʿAdud al-Dawla's objectives.

The first difficulty he had to meet was the argument, repeatedly advanced by the Byzantines, that they had already concluded an agreement with Ibn al-Baqillānī. The Byzantines consistently returned to this argument throughout the negotiations, although Ibn Shahrām claimed to have exposed its emptiness at an early stage.⁸⁰

Ibn Shahrām always replied that Ibn al-Baqillānī had agreed to nothing, but can his statement be accepted as trustworthy? It can be seen that at least one of his arguments in presenting his position was an obviously specious one, a typically diplomatic misrepresentation of facts. Ibn Shahrām claims that it was the aid of the amir of Mosul Abū Taghlib that made it possible for Skleros to ravage the Empire for seven years (sic). In

saying that, he was attempting to frighten the Byzantines with the specter of ʿAdud al-Dawla's enmity. If the interference of Abū Taghlib could lead to so much evil, how much more damage would the hostility of the ever so much more powerful ʿAdud al-Dawla cause?⁸¹ In fact, Abū Taghlib's contribution to Skleros' cause never seems to have been significant. Skleros had found substantial support among the Armenians and Muslims of the eastern themes, from all the thematic infantry of Anatolia, and many of the provincial magnates. Meanwhile, Abū Taghlib was involved in fighting ʿAdud al-Dawla in Iraq and was dead by the end of August, 979. He was hardly in a position to have kept Skleros' rebellion alive for seven years. In fact, Skylitzes indicates that the remnants of Skleros' rebellion had received an amnesty in 980.⁸²

Ibn Shahrām was guilty of inventing arguments to help himself in obtaining his goal. His success, however, was a result of his ability to divide the Emperor from his military leaders. These were the Domestic Bardas Phocas and his father, the Curopolates Leo Phocas. Although the Parakoimomenos Basil Lekapenos had always been a powerful figure within Constantinople, his position at the time of Ibn Shahrām's visit appears to have depended on substantial accommodation to the viewpoint of the military leaders. Ibn Shahrām pictures the Emperor Basil as eager to secure a treaty which would remove the danger

of hostilities on the eastern frontier while the Parakoi-
momenos, the Phokai, and the other soldiers were com-
 pletely opposed.⁸³ "[The soldiers'] swords would fall into
 disuse and their wages would be reduced as is the custom
 at Byzantium when they make peace," Ibn Shahrām postu-
 lates.⁸⁴ Although certainly somewhat of an oversimplifi-
 cation, Ibn Shahrām's statement appears accurate in regard
 to the attitude of the army. By making the eastern
 frontier the main zone of hostilities, the influence and
 importance of the Anatolian military in the Byzantine
 state would continue to be strong. In addition, Ibn
 Shahrām quotes Bardas Phocas as saying that he had personal
 reasons for preventing the Emperor from making peace
 with Baghdad.⁸⁵ Ibn Shahrām claimed to have learned at
 the Byzantine court that Bardas Phocas, already in 372/
 981-982, was conspiring to make himself emperor in the
 same way that his uncle Nicephoros had two decades
 earlier.⁸⁶

According to Ibn Shahrām, there was an uneasy
 alliance between the Parakoimomenos Basil and the Domestic
 Bardas Phocas, each distrustful of the other but neither
 strong enough at that point to remove the other. The
 Emperor Basil was wary of both but was not yet capable
 of overruling them.

In a letter delivered to the Emperor by Ibn
 Shahrām's host Nicephoros Uranos, who was a trusted
 intimate of the Emperor Basil, Ibn Shahrām counseled Basil

on the advantages of peace.⁸⁷ Ibn Shahrām presumptuously claims to have set out a list of priorities conducive to Basil II's well-being, "It is necessary first that you preserve your life, second your power, and third your followers. Do not trust anyone who will benefit by your ruin!"⁸⁸

By luck, when the Parakoimomenos fell ill and was restricted to his quarters, a chance came for Ibn Shahrām to get the ear of the Emperor alone. The co-operation of Nicephoros Uranos, who was a rival of the Parakoimomenos, permitted him to receive a private audience.

Ibn Shahrām's discussion with the Emperor revolved around a clause concerning the recognition of ʿAdud al-Dawla's sovereignty over the lands east of the Euphrates. At first Basil was unwilling to consider the inclusion of the transfer of the Aleppan kharāj (land tax)⁸⁹ to ʿAdud al-Dawla in the agreement. As yet, Ibn Shahrām had made no proposal for the surrender of Skleros to the Byzantines. When he complained that the recognition of Būyid sovereignty in regard to Aleppo was omitted from the treaty, Basil, having sent everyone else away, offered to make the transfer of the Aleppan kharāj in return for Bardas Skleros. Ibn Shahrām quickly dismissed the idea as a remote possibility. He was not authorized, he said, to accept such an agreement. Basil then replied that Ibn Qūnus, the Byzantine ambassador who had accompanied Ibn Shahrām from Baghdad, had been offered this same

formula. As the recovery of Skleros had been the stated Byzantine objective since the first Byzantine embassy to Baghdad in 369/979-980,⁹⁰ it appears that Ibn Shahrām's refusal to consider that alternative was merely diplomatic pretense, meant to extract more concessions. As a compromise was soon reached that circumvented Ibn Shahrām's professed instructions, it appears that this was indeed his tactic.

Ibn Shahrām was to take back an agreement excluding all mention of Aleppo or the surrender of Skleros. This is the treaty he refers to as that negotiated by Nicephoros Uranos. It applied only to the lands east of the Euphrates (and probably south of Bād's lands).⁹¹ Nicephoros Uranos would accompany him to Baghdad and take with him a copy of a second provisional agreement providing for the cession of Aleppo in return for the surrender of Skleros. The acceptance of either text was to entail a suspension of hostilities for ten years.

Abū Shujā^C al-Rūdhrawārī's comments on Ibn Shahrām's report provide further details. If Abū al-Ma^Cālī, the ruler of Aleppo, would not comply with the terms of the treaty regarding Aleppo, it would fall to the Byzantines to compel him to cooperate.

Bād, the Kurdish chief who dominated Apahunik^C and the western end of Lake Van, was to pay a sum to Baghdad equivalent to what he had customarily paid to Constantinople

in the past. The Byzantines agreed neither to aid Bād to resist the Būyids nor to give him refuge if they attacked him.⁹²

Also included in the terms of the treaty was the surrender of all Muslim prisoners in Byzantine possession. The Byzantines also saluted ʿAdud al-Dawla as Mālik al-Islām and Shāhānshāh at the imperial court in Constantinople. They also wanted guarantees concerning their co-religionists in the areas surrounding Baghdad; Ibn Shahrām must have satisfied this Byzantine demand.⁹³

For determining the date of Ibn Shahrām's embassy there is a helpful reference in his report to Bardas Phocas' intervention at Aleppo in Jumādā I, 371/November 2-December 1, 981. Yahyā b. Saʿīd says that when Bardas Phocas' army arrived at Aleppo, there was brief fighting between it and the Hamdānids. Then Bardas Phocas, agreeing to a reduction in the tribute from 700,000 dirhams annually to 400,000, settled the affair. He remained at Aleppo for only five days.⁹⁴

On his way to Constantinople Ibn Shahrām had had an interview with Bardas Phocas near Charsianon in the theme of the same name. It was then that he learned Phocas' sentiments in regard to the treaty and toward the young emperors Basil and Constantine. Also present was an Aleppan representative from whom Phocas was seeking the kharāj for an undefined number of years in the past.⁹⁵

Ibn Shahrām says that after he had been in Constantinople two months, the Parakoimomenos summoned him to a meeting with the Curopalates Leo Phocas and some other patricians. The discussion turned to the question of who was sovereign over Aleppo. The Curopalates remarked to Ibn Shahrām, "If the ruler of Aleppo brings us the kharāj, we will know then that you are wrong in your statement and that he prefers us to you." Ibn Shahrām says that he replied, "Unless it is a trick, I know that he would not do it."

Later, the Emperor summoned Ibn Shahrām and told him that the kharāj had arrived from Aleppo. Ibn Shahrām was apparently already fully informed of the circumstances in which Abu al-Ma^Cālī had delivered it. He replied, "As for the kharāj, you have taken it, and I know it is a trick because ^CAdud al-Dawla never imagined that you would think what you have done permissible and did not send an army to stop your army."⁹⁶

Thus, after a period of non-payment the Aleppan tribute, provided for in the Byzantine treaty with Qarghuwayh of 359/969, arrived in Constantinople when Ibn Shahrām had been there for two months or more. Indubitably, Ibn Shahrām was speaking of the intervention, mentioned by Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd, of Bardas Phocas' army in north Syria. Therefore, assuming the time necessary for a caravan to cross from Aleppo to Constantinople as slightly

more than two months, Ibn Shahrām must have arrived at Constantinople in November, 981 or somewhat earlier.

In the end, however, no peace treaty was ever concluded. When Ibn Shahrām and Nicephoros Uranos arrived in Baghdad, ^CAdud al-Dawla was suffering from a fatal illness. After his death, 8 Shawwāl, 372/March 26, 983, it was his successor Ṣamṣām al-Dawla (372-376/983-987) who received the Byzantine ambassador. The Būyid Amir accepted both the provisional version of the treaty, which included the exchange of Aleppo's kharāj and the tribute from Bād in return for an agreement concerning the delivery of Skleros and also the so-called treaty negotiated by Nicephoros Uranos, which recognized Būyid suzerainty only as far west as the Euphrates.⁹⁷ Uranos was to remain at Baghdad while a messenger from his entourage went to Constantinople and obtained the Emperor's seal and signature.

The chronicler Abū Shujā^C al-Rūdhrāwarī reports that both versions of the treaty were sent to Constantinople and ratified there.⁹⁸ At this point the clause providing for the surrender of Skleros should have been put into effect. This stipulated that the first year Constantine and Romanos Skleros would return to the Empire where they would take up their former ranks and situations under a guarantee of personal safety. All their property would be restored to them. If after two years their

treatment satisfied the requirements agreed upon in the treaty, Bardas Skleros himself would return to the Empire and the kharāj from Aleppo and the contributions from Bād would be paid thereafter to Baghdad.

Although the agreement was supposedly ratified, it was never put into force. Abū Shujā^C does not explain this contradiction. The Byzantine writers are of no help in this situation; they do not mention any agreement with Baghdad. Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd writes of Ibn Shahrām's mission to Constantinople:

^CAdud al-Dawla sent an intimate of his known as Ibn Sahrā [Shahrām] to the Emperor Basil concerning the question of Skleros and his plan [i.e., Skleros' intended rebellion] and the possessions [Skleros] had offered to [^CAdud al-Dawla]. He had promised if he were victorious to hand over to him fortresses which the Byzantines had captured and wrested from the hands of the Muslims. [^CAdud al-Dawla] called on [Basil] to surrender these fortresses, and if he did not, he would provide Skleros with armies and give him assistance in what he requested for making war against him. The Emperor Basil informed him that he had little concern about it and that it was not among those [things] which alarmed him.⁹⁹

Yahyā's statements cannot be considered fully accurate. The authenticity of Ibn Shahrām's report, which reveals the extensive concern Basil II felt at the prospect of ^CAdud al-Dawla supporting Skleros, cannot be impugned.¹⁰⁰ However, it is obvious that this episode in Byzantine-Būyid diplomacy did not become public knowledge at the time.

Before the provisions of the treaty could be carried out, some obstacle must have arisen to its fulfillment, but whether it originated in Byzantium or Baghdad is unknown. Several possible explanations can be offered. The first is that the military leaders, the Phocas family, and the dominant figure in the palace, the Parakoimomenos Basil, managed to block the execution of the agreement at an advanced stage. The political temperatures was rising quickly as the Emperor Basil prepared to throw off the influence of the Parakoimomenos, which he finally did in 375/985-986, and to take the direction of affairs into his own hands.¹⁰¹ Perhaps, the sabotage of the peace with the Būyids was one of the factors that determined Basil II on the Parakoimomenos' ouster.

The situation in the Būyid state also became confused after ʿAdud al-Dawla's death in 983. The Amir had failed to appoint a successor. When one son Sharaf al-Dawla, who was the governor of Kirmān, learned of ʿAdud al-Dawla's death and the recognition of his brother Šamsām al-Dawla as senior amir, he seized Shīrāz, the capital of the province of Fars, and marched against Baghdad. A state of war existed in the Būyid state until 376/986.¹⁰²

In this situation it was no longer the Byzantines but the Būyids who most needed a peace treaty. The distasteful clauses which Basil II had agreed to were no longer justified.

Šamsām al-Dawla soon found himself involved in a two-front war. Later the same year in which ʿAdud al-Dawla had died, Bād the Kurd began raiding from Lake Van into the Jazīra and then turned southeast toward Mosul. In 373/983-984 Bād defeated two different Būyid armies in separate battles and seized Mosul itself. Although Ziyār b. Shahrakawayh managed to defeat Bād and drive him from Mosul in Šafar, 374/July-August, 984, the Būyids themselves did not possess the strength to retake the Diyār Bakr. Instead Šamsām al-Dawla invited Abū al-Maʿālī, Ḥamdānid amir of Aleppo, to occupy the province, but he also was too weak to defeat Bād and withdrew. This left the Diyār Bakr to Bād who, having already seized Amida, completed the occupation of its two chief cities with the capture of Mayyāfāriqīn in Rabiʿ II, 374/September, 984. In the same year the Būyids made peace with Bād, who was recognized by them as the legal ruler of the Diyār Bakr and half the Tūr ʿAbdīn, the northernmost section of the Diyār Rabiʿa.¹⁰³

It also is possible, as Canard suggested, that Byzantium had violated the assurances it had given to discontinue supporting Bād, and for this reason Šamsām al-Dawla broke off relations with the Empire.¹⁰⁴

Thus, for whatever reason--numerous interpretations are possible--Byzantine-Būyid relations deteriorated. Yahyā b. Saʿīd, Skylitzes, and Zonaras state that

Nicephoros Uranos, the Byzantine ambassador, was thrown into prison. Yahyā explains that he had tried to poison Skleros, Zonaras that he attempted to make secret contact with Skleros, Skylitzes that he had simply fallen under suspicion.¹⁰⁵ In any case, the Byzantine sources are in error when they pretend that it was ʿAdud al-Dawla who gave the order for Uranos' arrest since he had died before Uranos' audience with Ṣamsām al-Dawla. No Baghdad source confirms that Uranos was ever actually imprisoned.

Probably, the termination of relations, following the agreement upon and conclusion of a treaty in Baghdad, came about first as a temporary pause in the negotiations, occasioned by ʿAdud al-Dawla's death, which radically changed the political situation. It then afterward grew into a total break in relations when attempts to renegotiate the pact or to regain the former momentum failed. Rather than imprisoning Uranos, the Būyids may have held him in honorable house arrest because of his high rank and close friendship with the Emperor Basil II in the hope that this would be conducive to the eventual conclusion of a treaty. What Yahyā b. Saʿīd refers to as Uranos' escape in 376/986-987 was probably the occasion of his eventual release by the Būyids and departure from Baghdad. Once the Būyids had finally allowed Skleros to invade Byzantium in December, 986, there was no further reason to detain Uranos. The potential hazards standing in the

way of a successful escape all the way from Baghdad to the Byzantine border make Yahyā's story appear improbable.

In the commercial sphere, at least, there was one solid product of ʿAdud al-Dawla's Byzantine diplomacy, according to the twelfth-century historian of the city of Mayyāfāriqīn, Ibn al-Azraq al-Farīqī (d. 572/1176). This agreement provided that both the Byzantine emperor and the Būyid amir would levy a 10 percent tax on the goods which merchants brought from Byzantine into Muslim territory and which Christian merchants transported from Muslim territory into Byzantine. After ʿAdud al-Dawla's death the Byzantines began to impose the import tax on all merchants, not only Christians, who entered the Empire from Muslim territory.¹⁰⁶

Syria in the Shadows of its Neighbors, 980-986

Between the rebellions of Bardas Skleros and Bardas Phocas some small but not inconsequential events slightly altered the relationship of political forces in Syria.

As mentioned earlier, in Jumādā I, 371/November, 981, Bardas Phocas led an army to Aleppo. He forced Abū al-Maʿālī to pay the annual tribute or, perhaps, the tribute accumulated for several years, as required by the treaty of 359/969-970. Abū al-Maʿālī, having ceased making payments during Skleros' rebellion, was not eager to resume.¹⁰⁷

Abū al-Ma^Cālī's policy was to achieve maximum independence for the amirate of Aleppo. Relatively weak, however, and with few resources, it was sandwiched between far more muscular neighbors. The Byzantines wanted a ruler in Aleppo who was, for all intensive purposes, independent of other Arab powers. The Būyid dynasty needed a cooperative, if not subservient, amir in Aleppo in order to realize its foreign policy goals at first in Syria and afterwards in Egypt. It was for this reason that the matter of who was sovereign over Aleppo received so much attention during Ibn Shahrām's Constantinople embassy. In contrast, the amir of Aleppo's best prospect for maintaining the city's independence was in playing off one power against the other. For this reason, Abū al-Ma^Cālī recognized the nominal sovereignty of ^CAdud al-Dawla in the khutba while being reluctant to substitute dependency upon Baghdad for the Byzantine protectorate, established in the 359/969 Byzantine-Aleppan pact. This is evident from the stipulation Ibn Shahrām demanded which called for the Byzantines to force the amir of Aleppo to pay the kharāj to Baghdad if he refused to comply with the transfer embodied in the Byzantine-Būyid treaty.

The establishment by the Kurd Bād b. Dūstuk of an independent state in the Jazīra in 383-384/982-984 changed all this by cutting off--permanently, it turned out--the

amirate of Aleppo from Būyid Iraq. At the same time the Fāṭimids were finally taking a seemingly firm hold over Palestine and southern Syria. Thereafter, the rivalry for Aleppo was between the Byzantine Empire and the Fāṭimids.

In 370/979-980 the Bedouin chief Mufarrij b. Daghfal b. al-Jarrāḥ rose up against the Fāṭimids in Palestine. The following year a Fāṭimid army chased Ibn al-Jarrāḥ into the Arabian peninsula. Ibn al-Jarrāḥ then escaped northward to Ḥims, where Bakjūr, the Ḥamdānid wālī, gave him refuge. From Ḥims Ibn al-Jarrāḥ went on to Antioch where he found asylum with the Byzantines.¹⁰⁸ In 372/981-982 another Fāṭimid army left Egypt under the command of Yaltakīn. He managed to capture Damascus, 27 Muharram, 373/June 12, 983, from Qassām, who had preserved the city's autonomy since 368/978 when al-^CAzīz had defeated Alptakīn, the former amir of Damascus.

At this time, Bakjūr, the Ḥamdānid wālī at Ḥims, whom, it will be recalled, Abū al-Ma^Cālī had expelled from Aleppo earlier, was trying to interest al-^CAzīz in an attack on his master. With Fāṭimid troops sent from newly-won Damascus Bakjūr marched on Aleppo and invested the city, 1 Rabī^C II, 373/September 12, 983. The siege was abruptly interrupted, however, when Ibn al-Jarrāḥ, whom, as a refugee, Bakjūr had sheltered two years earlier, sent him word that the Domestic Bardas Phocas was leading

a Byzantine army toward Aleppo. Forewarned, Bakjūr managed to escape south without mishap.¹⁰⁹

Bardas Phocas camped at Aleppo on Thursday, 16 Rabī^C II/September 27, 983. Again there was fighting between Ḥamdānīd and Byzantine troops before Abū al-Ma^Cālī agreed to hand over the tribute for two years, 40,000 dīnārs in all. Included must have been the tribute for the preceding year. Bardas Phocas then marched from Aleppo to Ḥimṣ, which, it is said, Abū al-Ma^Cālī had asked the Domestic to raze from fear of Bakjūr. Phocas attacked and destroyed Ḥimṣ, 19 Jumādā I, 373/October 29, 983. Allegedly, Phocas had already departed from Ḥimṣ when he sent back a message requesting money from the population. When the citizens refused on the pretext that the city was in a state of impoverished desolation, he ordered it sacked. This is referred to as the second sack of Ḥimṣ, the first having taken place November 5, 968.¹¹⁰

Phocas probably returned to Antioch via Tripoli and the coastal route, which Byzantine armies campaigning in north Syria customarily followed from the time of Nicephoros Phocas until the end of the tenth century when Byzantine invasions of Syria ceased.

Bakjūr remained in Fāṭimid service as governor of Damascus from 1 Rajab, 373-17 Rajab, 378/December 9, 983-October 31, 988. For the first time a fairly well-consolidated Fāṭimid provincial organization came to exist

on the actual border of the amirate of Aleppo. For the Byzantines the Fāṭimid presence threatened to become a worrisome problem, but in 983 that time was still some years in the future.

Abū al-Ma^Cālī, recognizing the increasing power in Syria of the Fāṭimids and the diminution of Būyid influence, ordered in 376/985-986 that the khutba at Aleppo be resumed in the name of al-^CAzīz rather than that of the ^CAbbāsīd al-Ta'ī^C.¹¹¹

Contacts between Fāṭimids and Byzantines appear to have been limited in the first decade of Basil II's reign. In the first year, Michael Burtzes, the governor at Antioch, made a successful raid on Tripoli,¹¹² but Skleros' rebellion made impossible the mounting of other attacks on Fāṭimid-held Tripoli, the only spot where Byzantine and Fāṭimid territory touched.

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd preserves the memory of raids which both Byzantines and Fāṭimids made along the Mediterranean coastal corridor, formed by the mountains running parallel to the Syrian coast, in 370/July, 980-July, 981. In that year a certain Kurmrūk (K.r.m.rūk) was appointed Byzantine governor at Latakia for, among other services, having executed a very successful raid on Tripoli. His tenure as governor had a tragic end. Through a bold night attack he managed to foil one Fāṭimid raiding party, but during a second raid in the same year he was captured and

sent to Cairo where he was later executed. In 375/985-986 the Fātimids captured Bulunyās, a coastal fortress south of Latakia, but the Byzantines recaptured it after the first attempted seige was interrupted.¹¹³ Thus, there were only low-key hostilities between Byzantines and Fātimids along the Mediterranean coast itself during the decade 975-985.

The Amir of Aleppo was engaged in another dispute with Byzantium in 375/985-986. Its origin was again Abū al-Ma^Cālī's refusal to pay the annual tribute. Both he and Phocas were more aggressive in pressing their positions than in previous meetings. At first the Domestic seized Killiz, a fortified town near the northern border of the amirate in Ṣafar, 375/June-July, 985, and then attacked Apamea, a town on the Orontes considerably south of Aleppo. Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd, who is the authoritative source for Byzantine-Aleppan relations, says that Abū al-Ma^Cālī in retaliation sent Qarghuwayh leading a force of Hamdānids which attacked Dayr Sim^Cān, a famous Melkite monastery on the actual frontier between Aleppo and Antioch, September 9, 986. A great many monks were massacred and many other people--the monastery's population was swollen by refugees from the fighting--were captured and made a spectacle of in Aleppo. Phocas then attacked Kafr Tab, a town near Apamea. However, when word of the attack on Dayr Sim^Cān reached the Emperor Basil, he ordered Phocas to break off the siege of Apamea.

The conclusion of this mysterious episode, about which very little is clear, was that Abū al-Ma^Cālī and Phocas agreed to a new treaty in 376/986-987, which included the annual payment of the same sum--40,000 dirhams--as previously. Unfortunately, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd gives no explanation why Abū al-Ma^Cālī signed a treaty in A.H. 376 which he had rejected a year earlier, nor why Phocas attacked Killiz and Apamea rather than marching directly on Aleppo as he had done in 371/981 and 373/983. Ibn al-^CAdīm, the historian of Aleppo, also offers no solution to this problem; his narrative of the events of these years is hopelessly confused.¹¹⁴

The amputation of Killiz and Apamea may have represented the adoption by Bardas Phocas of a new technique for coping with Abū al-Ma^Cālī's chronic recalcitrance when it came to paying the annual tribute to the Byzantine Empire. Phocas may have hoped to guarantee the eventual resumption of payments by holding Killiz and Apamea as security. Also, however, his rapid resort to hostilities can be viewed as an aspect of Phocas' desire to manage his own private foreign policy toward the Arabs of Syria. He wanted to rely on the use of force and violence to gain Byzantine objectives. It was possibly for the same reason that he earlier had told Ibn Shahrām that he opposed peace with ^CAdud al-Dawla. Concurrently, Basil II may have favored a more pacific approach to the Arabs,

including the Amir of Aleppo. Therefore, he ordered Phocas to terminate the siege of Apamea. Possibly, the disagreement over how Byzantine policy toward the Muslim caliphates and lesser states should be conducted was one of the reasons that inspired Phocas to revolt.

The Rebellion of Bardas Phocas, 987-989

The rebellion of Bardas Phocas greatly transformed the situation on the Byzantine southeastern frontier. The main Muslim powers as well as the minor states of Syria and Iraq, accustomed to their stronger and frequently aggressive northern neighbor, suddenly found themselves confronted with an inviting opportunity to meddle in Byzantine affairs. This happened at a time when the Fātimids were emerging as a Syrian power and Būyid influence had suffered a disastrous eclipse in Syria and northern Iraq.

A preview to the rebellion took place when the Emperor had dropped the Parakoimomenos Basil Lekapenos from office after he had acted for ten years as virtual shadow ruler sometime after Rabī^c II, 375/August 21-September 18, 985. Leo Melissenos, the Byzantine governor at Antioch, reacted by breaking off the siege of the coastal fortress at Bulunyās, which the Fātimids had recently seized from the Byzantines. Did he act in anticipation of the rebellion, which was delayed, however, until 986 or 987? Although there is insufficient evidence

to arrive at a firm conclusion, it seems likely that Melissenos recognized the significance of the Parakoimomenos's dismissal, but that Bardas Phocas and his supporters; were not yet far enough along in their plans or preparations for rebellion to act immediately. Ibn Shahrām in 371/981-982 had already recognized the divergence in the Parakoimomenos and the Emperor's viewpoints and interests and the contradictory interests of the latter and the Domestic Bardas Phocas.¹¹⁵ For this reason, there was a substantial but not complete community of interests between the Parakoimomenos and Bardas Phocas. So long as neither was in a position to establish his dominance over Basil II in the manner that Nicephoros Phocas and John Tzimiskes had done, each could best protect his political base while working in concert with the other. For it can be seen from Ibn Shahrām's report that already in 981-982 the Emperor desired to break the power of both the Parakoimomenos and Bardas Phocas but lacked the means to do so. Instead, subtle maneuvering perforce took the place of open conflict. The deposal of Basil Lekapenos may have sent a signal to the great Asiatic military landholders that the Emperor would turn against them next.

In late 985 Phocas was not ready to act as Melissenos expected. Basil II commanded Melissenos to return to Bulunyās and capture the fortress or to repay

the salaries of the soldiers employed in the fruitless siege.¹¹⁶ The Emperor's order illustrates his conception of what was a desirable relationship between himself and his generals. Melissenos had no choice but to comply. Subsequently, he captured Bulunyās.

In the following year the Emperor Basil II campaigned against Samuel, the leader of the rebellious Bulgars. Skylitzes states that Basil invaded Bulgaria without consulting the Domestic (i.e., Phocas) and the other leading Anatolian generals. That, coupled with the ambush and destruction of the Emperor's army at a pass known as Trajan's gate, August 17, 986, was enough to bring the simmering conflict between Basil II and the military grouped around Phocas into the open.¹¹⁷

The news of Basil II's defeat, according to Yahyā b. Sa^cīd, also travelled quickly to Baghdad where Skleros was languishing while awaiting the chance to reinvolve himself in imperial politics.¹¹⁸ An agreement Bardas Skleros signed with the Būyids in Sha^cbān, 376/December 6, 986-January 3, 987 states the conditions under which the Būyid sultan Šamsām al-Dawla agreed to release Skleros.¹¹⁹

The near concurrence in time between Basil's defeat and the conclusion of this agreement tends to verify Yahyā b. Sa^cīd's statement that the defeat itself prompted Šamsām al-Dawla to release Skleros. In order to gain his release, Skleros consented to four conditions:

a) To maintain peaceful relations with the Būyid sultan and all those with whom the sultan enjoys friendly relations.

b) To refrain from raids on the Muslim frontier and to prevent any of his subjects or subordinates who had such intentions from carrying them out.

c) To free all Muslim prisoners who wished to return to their homes and to transport them, accompanied by their wives, families, and possessions, safely to the border without expense.

d) To turn over seven fortresses on the extreme northern edge of the Diyār Bakr. (These must have been the fortresses taken either by Nicephoros Phocas and John Tzimiskes or during the rebellion of Skleros.) The seven fortresses from the east were: Khuwīt (Chouēt), south of Taraun and separated from Sasun by the ridge of the Taurus mountains, and al-Sanāsuna, which dominated Sasun, and farther west Ḥānī at the source of the Ambar Cay, Egil on the Arghana Su, Anzīt (Jubayr Qalé) approximately ten miles downriver from Egil at the confluence of the Arghana Su and the Zibene Su (both original tributaries of the Tigris) and Tell Khūm, to the southeast at no great distance from the Arghana Su. The location of the seventh fortress, given as Arḥakāh or Ḥiṣn al-H.n.d.r.s., cannot be identified at present.¹²⁰

In return the Būyids promised Skleros safe passage to the frontier and the right to purchase supplies and

equipment. The Būyids also pledged not to promote any rival--Greek, Armenian, or Georgian--to Skleros nor to contribute in any way to the diminution of Skleros' power through the conclusion of another, parallel, alliance. The sultan guaranteed the security of the inhabitants of the frontier regions, which Skleros had committed himself to surrendering, as well as their homes, lands, and wealth. Administration and taxes were to be maintained as they had been under Byzantine government.

The Būyids released Skleros with the complete understanding that he was to initiate hostilities.¹²¹ This is explicitly shown in the agreement which refers to Skleros as the Byzantine Emperor. The Būyids did not, however, give him any identifiable military aid. Probably they had none to give. In fact, this seems to have been the last act in the foreign policy which ʿAdud al-Dawla with his ambitious designs on Syria and Egypt had launched. With the complete expulsion of Būyid influence from Syria and the Byzantine borderland, the only means available to Ṣamsām al-Dawla for reestablishing Būyid prestige was this wild gamble on a rebellion led by Skleros.

Thus, the Būyids set Skleros free under carefully arranged conditions. He did not escape from Būyid territory as the Byzantine chroniclers claim.¹²²

Hilāl al-Sābī, an eyewitness, briefly describes Skleros' farewell audience with Ṣamsām al-Dawla. As it

was winter, the palace was hung with precious rugs and fine curtains. Ten thousand Daylamite troops were drawn up alongside the route which Skleros, his brother Constantine, and his son Romanos followed to the palace after crossing the Tigris by boat. Reportedly, Skleros thanked Ṣamsām al-Dawla and promised to faithfully observe the engagement he had made and then departed.¹²³

Many Muslims resented the release of Skleros. As a precaution Ṣamsām al-Dawla dispatched Bedouin of the Banū Musayyib, a sub-tribe of the Banū ʿUqayl, to accompany Skleros' party of three hundred to their encampments outside Baghdad. Members of the Banū Numayr joined them there. Rather than going by way of the settled areas of Iraq, Skleros chose to head directly through the desert toward Melitene. This route took him through territories in the Diyār Rabīʿa inhabited by the ʿUqayl and others in the Diyār Muḍar which the Numayr populated. All the time Skleros diligently worked to draw the Bedouin Arabs to his cause.

Skleros arrived at Melitene in February, having left Baghdad in Shaʿbān, 376/December 6, 986-January 3, 987. According to Asolik, the journey from Baghdad to Melitene took thirty-one days. At Melitene he found the Bāsalīq Kulayb, who had supported him in the earlier rebellion. Large numbers of ʿUqayl and Numayr tribesmen, many Armenians, and the local soldiery rallied to Skleros' banner. He also called for support from Bād b. Dūstuk,

the Kurdish amir of Apahunik^C and Mayyāfāriqīn. Bād sent soldiers under the command of a certain Abū ^CAlī, whom Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd calls Bād's brother. Actually, he was probably Bād's nephew and eventual successor Abū ^CAlī al-Hasan b. Marwān.¹²⁴

It can be definitely established from the corresponding statements of Asolik and Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd that Skleros arrived in Byzantine territory and began mustering an army in early February, 987.¹²⁵ The activities of Bardas Phocas in 986-987 are much harder to follow. According to Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd, the Emperor Basil had removed Phocas as domestic after the dismissal of the Parakoimomenos and appointed him governor of Antioch and dux of the East. Bardas could have concluded the treaty in 376/May 13, 986-May 2, 987 with the amir of Aleppo either in his capacity of domestic or of dux of the east.¹²⁶

Yahyā says that Skleros' incipient rebellion forced the Emperor to restore Bardas Phocas to the post of domestic in Dhū al-Ḥijja, 376/April 3-May 2, 987. At this point, Yahyā continues, Phocas sent word to Skleros, requesting him to send his brother Constantine, who was also Phocas' brother-in-law, on the understanding that Phocas and Skleros would arrange the terms of an alliance, the object of which would be to oust Basil II and Constantine VIII as the actual rulers of the Byzantine empire. They would divide the Empire between themselves, Phocas

taking the European territories, including Constantinople, and Skleros receiving the Asian.

Thereafter a meeting was arranged between Bardas Phocas and Bardas Skleros. At their second interview Phocas seized Skleros and imprisoned him. Phocas promised Skleros that if he were successful in seizing the Empire, he would release him and fulfill their bargain. Yahyā b. Sa^cīd gives no date for Phocas' treacherous capture of Skleros but says that Phocas was proclaimed Emperor, September 14, 987.¹²⁷

According to Skylitzes, a group of leading generals met in the Charsianon theme at the estate of Eustathios Maleinos, who had loyally sided with Basil II and Phocas during the earlier rebellion, to proclaim the rebellion and hail Phocas as Emperor.¹²⁸ Skylitzes in saying that Phocas was proclaimed emperor August 15, 987, dates the event a month earlier than does Yahyā. However, the greatest difference between the accounts given by Yahyā and Skylitzes is the latter's conviction that when Skleros arrived at Melitene he found that Phocas had already been proclaimed emperor.¹²⁹

Since it is known from the information of Yahyā b. Sa^cīd and Asolik that Skleros reached Melitene in January or February, 987, Skylitzes is actually giving two different times for the proclamation of Phocas as emperor: before Skleros' arrival in Melitene in January

or February, 987 and August 15, 987. Asolik's information compounds the confusion. He says that Phocas was proclaimed emperor in the same year in which Skleros reached Melitene, that is, Arm. E. (Armenian Era) 435/March 25, 986-March 24, 987, but after Phocas had seized Skleros, therefore in February or March, 987 (i.e., before the end of the Armenian calendar year.)¹³⁰

Two possibilities for the resolution of this confusion suggest themselves. The first is that Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd and Skylitzes, following a Byzantine Greek chronographic tradition, dated Phocas' proclamation a year too late. In this case, it would have actually taken place at the time of the Emperor's Bulgarian campaign. In fact, Skylitzes connects the immediate cause of the rebellion to the Emperor's conducting this campaign without consulting the eastern generals. Why should a year have passed before they decided on revolt? As Skleros realized, it was a golden opportunity for a rebellion. Basil II was in Europe, and the military forces available to him were in disarray. Phocas, it is clear, had for some time been intent on rebellion.¹³¹ However, placing the beginning of the revolt in 986 fails to explain how Basil could have recalled Phocas to the domestic in April, 987, as Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd claims. Phocas, having proclaimed himself emperor, would have been in open opposition to Basil II by that date.

The second possibility is that Phocas began mustering forces after his demotion, which took place in 985 or 986. It will be recalled that during Bardas Skleros' original rebellion one and a half to two years may have elapsed from the time Skleros first raised the standard of rebellion until his arrival on the Asian shore opposite Constantinople. Skleros consumed much of this time in locating and consolidating sources of support. Phocas similarly may have hovered in a state of tacit revolt until, taking advantage of the opportunity reappointment as domestic offered him, he eliminated Skleros as an obstacle to his plans. Thereafter, Phocas allowed himself to be openly proclaimed emperor. Unfortunately, as in the case of the first solution proposed, there is no evidence to conclusively support the second proposal. Both remain hypothetical. What is certain, however, is that Phocas' eventual proclamation as emperor ended a long period, which may have begun as early as 979, of jockeying for position, allies, and strength.

It should be noted that the statements made by none of our three authorities on this rebellion--Asolik, Skylitzes, or Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd--can be rejected out of hand. Asolik was a contemporary of these events and a native of the area in which they took place. The reliability of Skylitzes and Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd depends on their sources, which cannot be impugned as there is no way at present of identifying them.

Having blunted the threat of Skleros, Phocas began marching toward Constantinople.¹³² According to Asolik, Skleros' Arab allies, returning home, overran a large part of the southeastern corner of the Empire, reaching as far east as Apahunik^c.¹³³ Probably, the troops which Bād b. Dūstuk had contributed to Skleros were among those which chose to desert Phocas.

Phocas' armies soon occupied Chrysopolis (modern Scutari) on the Asiatic shore opposite Constantinople and the length of the Hellespont as far west as Abydos, where the rebels met strong resistance and settled down to a long siege.¹³⁴ Through control of the Hellespont Phocas hoped to cut off Constantinople from its Anatolian food supply. Abydos, which was at the narrowest point of the Hellespont, was of crucial importance to both sides. The siege of Abydos was evidently lengthy, but the city held out. A stalemate developed with the rebels unable to gain control of the Hellespont or to cross to Europe while Basil was unable to take any effective counter-action.

In the course of the rebellion Basil II undertook two initiatives toward foreign rulers. One of these was directed to Valdimir the Prince of the Rus' in Kiev. Byzantium had had hostile relations with the Rus' during Sviatoslav's intervention in Bulgaria at the time of John Tzimiskes' reign. The town of Cherson in the Crimea also

was a recurring bone of contention between the two states. As is well-known, the Emperor offered his sister Anna in marriage to Viadimir in return for military aid with which to suppress the rebels. Vladimir accepted the proffered alliance, including the clause which demanded that Vladimir and his people be baptized as Christians, and sent Russian troops to Constantinople where they took an important role in the civil war.¹³⁵

Basil's other foreign policy initiative was made to the Fāṭimid caliph al-^CAzīz bi-Ilāh in 377/May 3, 987-April 22, 988. Until this time relations between Byzantium and the Fāṭimids had also been hostile. Only shortly before, a fleet of Egyptian warships had been sent on an unsuccessful mission to raid the Byzantine coast.

A Byzantine ambassador arrived in Palestine by boat and from there travelled by land to Cairo. There he managed to obtain al-^CAzīz's consent to a peace treaty of seven years duration. In exchange he agreed to two principal conditions: all Muslim prisoners whom the Byzantines held were to be released and the khutba was to be given in the name of al-^CAzīz in the mosque at Constantinople.¹³⁶ Always before it had been given in the name of the ^CAbbāsīd caliph. The recognition of the primacy of al-^CAzīz in place of that of the ^CAbbāsīd at Constantinople represented a great propaganda victory for the Fāṭimids.

Since a pre-eminent tendency in Fāṭimid propaganda was the claim to greater ability than the ^CAbbāsīd caliphate possessed for waging the Holy War (jihād) against the Byzantines, it might be wondered why al-^CAzīz agreed to renounce warfare against Byzantium when civil war rendered it vulnerable. The explanation appears to be that al-^CAzīz's action was a countermeasure to the alliance the Būyids had made with Skleros. Above all, the Fāṭimid caliph did not want to see an emperor whose primary loyalty was to Baghdad ruling at Constantinople.

The young Macedonian emperors Basil II and Constantine VIII probably began the counteroffensive in A.D. 988 (the exact date is not known) with the dispatch of the magister (Gregory?) Taronitēs by boat to Trebizond. There he raised a force and set out with it in the general direction of the Euphrates.¹³⁷ The purpose of his mission was apparently to draw Phocas away from the Hellespont by building up support in favor of Basil and Constantine in the areas of Armenian population along the Euphrates in Phocas' rear. If this was Taronites' intention, however, it was unsuccessful.

Phocas reacted to Taronites' activities by sending his son Nicephoros, known as Nicephoros "with the twisted neck," to seek aid from Phocas' former ally David, the Duke of Upper Tao.¹³⁸ Nicephoros "with the twisted neck" was only mildly successful in his mission. David gave

gave him 1,000 cavalrymen, commanded by one of his subordinates. Accompanying them were another 1,000 horsemen under the rulers of al-Khālidiyāt, whom Yahyā b. Sa^cīd calls the two sons of Bagrat. Both held the imperial rank of patrician.¹³⁹ This was only a meager contribution when compared to David's 12,000 picked troops which had helped Phocas defeat Skleros a decade earlier.

Troubled conditions in Georgia were partly responsible for David's cautious response. In Arm. E. 437/988-989 David became embroiled in a dispute with Bagrat III, the King of Abkhazia, and with Gurgen, the King of Iberia. This dispute was all the more unpleasant in that David, in the absence of any sons of his own, had raised Bagrat at his own court. Circa 978 as part of the agreement between David and John Marushidze, the viceroy of Abkhazia, which caused Bagrat III to be recognized as King of Abkhazia and heir to Bagrat II, the dotard king of Iberia, David designated Bagrat III heir to his own state of Upper Tao and its extensive dependencies.¹⁴⁰ Abkhazia, Iberia, and Upper Tao were all at the time ruled independently of each other.

The causes of the dispute between David and his adopted son Bagrat III are hidden.¹⁴¹ As an ally David had Bagrat II, known as the Simple, the grandfather of Bagrat III. According to Asolik, David and Bagrat II of Iberia summoned Smbat II, the King of Armenia (977-989),

who joined them in the canton of Javaxet^Ci. With him, and ranged against Bagrat III and his father Gurgen, were Abas, king of Kars (989-1029) and troops from Vaspurakan, Siuniq and Aluanq (Caucasian Albania). Possibly on account of the powerful coalition which David had drawn from as far away as Vaspurakan, the dispute may never have reached the stage of hostilities. Asolik says that peace was restored between David and his estranged heir through the good offices of King Smbat of Armenia.¹⁴²

Few facts are known about this curious episode. The reason for mentioning it here is to illustrate that at the time Phocas was seeking David of Upper Tao as an ally, Caucasian dynastic politics militated against David's wholehearted participation in favor of one side or the other in the Byzantine civil war.

In addition, choosing the correct side with which to ally in the Byzantine civil war involved a risky decision. On the one hand, Phocas controlled all of Anatolia. If he were successful in making himself emperor--at that stage momentum lay completely with Phocas--opposition to him would be costly to David later. On the other hand, he held the rank of magister and conditional title to the nominally Byzantine territories west of the Araxes, including Theodosiopolis, Hark^C, and Apahunik^C, all of which he had received from the Emperor Basil and would be jeopardized by turning against him.

For David, it can be seen, cooperation with the central government had been very rewarding.

David sent only 1,000 horsemen to aid Phocas in comparison to the 12,000 he had given him a decade earlier because supporting neither Phocas nor Basil wholeheartedly offered a possible means of escaping from this dilemma. To these 1,000 the two sons of Bagrat added another 1,000. Sending so small a force held out the hope of avoiding the wrath of both rebel and legitimate emperor, no matter who won out. If victorious, Phocas could not accuse David of failing to come to his aid. The Emperor, David hoped, would overlook the small Iberian contingent as inconsequential.

Thus, David of Upper Tao's involvement in Caucasian affairs plus a shrewd appreciation of his own interests precluded his forceful intervention in favor of either side in the Byzantine civil war.

Subsequent events demonstrate that David, in fact, had resolved on a course of straddling the fence between Phocas and Basil II. According to Yahyā b. Sa^cīd, who is the only historian to mention Phocas' overture to David, the Armeno-Iberian contingent together with Nicephoros Phocas' force clashed with Taronitēs and put him to flight. Soon afterwards, however, news of the complete victory which the Emperor had recently won over Phocas' lieutenant Kalokyros Delphinas at Chrysopolis reached the

Armeno-Iberian unit with Nicephoros Phocas. Pretending that the victory over Taronitēs completed the objectives of the campaign, the Armeno-Iberian troops returned home at once while Nicephoros Phocas' army dissolved. Obviously, David of Upper Tao was not deeply committed to Phocas' cause.¹⁴³

The victory which Basil II won at Chrysopolis was apparently achieved through a combination of two elements: the first was the presence of reliable new allies, the Russian troops--6,000 in number Asolik says--which Vladimir sent; the second was superior military organization and surprise. Basil's army, unexpectedly crossing the Bosphoros under cover of darkness, managed to escape detection. At dawn they fell on Kalokyros' army, which was destroyed. This adroitly executed operation turned the tide of war in favor of the young Macedonian emperors.¹⁴⁴ The Armenians and Iberians with Nicephoros Phocas realized at once that the advantage had shifted to Basil II and that their own political interests dictated immediate withdrawal from the civil war.

The only chronological data on the victory of the Armeno-Iberian auxiliaries over Taronitēs and the battle of Chrysopolis is a communication of March 2, 989 from Bardas Phocas to his son Leo at Antioch, which Yahyā b. Sa^cīd mentions after the two battles.¹⁴⁵ As Yahyā generally presents material in chronological order,

presumably Taronitēs' defeat and the battle of Chrysopolis preceded March 2, 989.

Both Basil II and Constantine VIII were present on the battlefield when the civil war was finally decided, April 13, 989, at Abydos. Phocas' death that day ended his rebellion. According to the Greek sources, Phocas was charging directly towards the Emperor Basil II, who stood coolly with a sword in one hand and an icon of the Holy Mother in the other when Phocas suddenly slumped in his saddle and then fell to the ground. Numerous stories circulated, explaining various causes of his death. Among these Skylitzes and Psellos propose one which cites poisoning as the cause. All this suggests that there was no certainty how Phocas died. The picturesque story of Phocas' death, which harks back to the two single combats Phocas allegedly fought during the rebellion of Skleros, is probably no more than a literary device meant to create suspense.¹⁴⁶ The most which can be said is that Phocas died in the battle at Abydos and that the force of his rebellion was broken there.¹⁴⁷

Bardas Skleros at that time gained his release from the fortress of Turopoion, where Phocas had incarcerated him. Both Skleros' former allies and those who had joined in the rebellion of Bardas Phocas and were left leaderless and branded as rebels rallied to him. Before the central government could reestablish its authority

in Anatolia, it was necessary to deal with Skleros in one way or another.

Skleros was able to block the roads of Anatolia and prevent the transport of food supplies to Constantinople, but the chroniclers do not report any battles fought or victories won by Skleros. Instead, he soon accepted the olive branch proffered by Basil II. According to Psellos, his surrender was obtained on the following conditions.

- a) Skleros would receive the highest rank below emperor.
- b) Those who had rebelled with him, including his generals, were to continue to occupy the same offices and ranks to which Skleros had appointed them.
- c) Their possessions, both predating the rebellion and obtained during it (sic), were guaranteed.
- d) Their status was not to be diminished in any way.

Skleros then renounced all pretensions to be the Emperor.¹⁴⁸

The little that Yahyā b. Sa^cīd and Skylitzes say about the final rebellion of Bardas Skleros demonstrates that Psellos, who is the most detailed source on this movement, has rhetorically inflated its real extent and significance. Instead of lasting several years, as Psellos claims,¹⁴⁹ it began after Phocas' death April 13, 989 and ended Friday, October 11, 989, when Basil II received Skleros. The Emperor reputedly remarked when he

saw his aging and nearly-blind opponent approaching, "He whom I feared and trembled at comes [to me] led by the hand."

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd says that Basil II gave Skleros lands at Ra^Cbān and al-Amīnāfwīn (an unidentified locality) in addition to his former holdings as a reward for surrendering. His brother Constantine and all Skleros' adherents received posts. These included Nicephoros "with the twisted neck" whom Basil II pardoned and gave a new estate.

Skleros, in agreeing to Basil's appeal to avoid the shedding of more Byzantine blood, obtained as favorable a settlement as the Emperor was able to give.¹⁵⁰ Skleros survived for only another year and one half after the end of his second rebellion. He died, March 6, 991, at his residence at Didymoteichon on the Marica river in southern Bulgaria.¹⁵¹

Skleros' renunciation of his pretensions to the Byzantine throne ended a period in which the primary thrust of Byzantine eastern policy was preserving the authority of the legitimate heirs of the Macedonian dynasty, Basil II and Constantine VIII. A conflict between Basil II, the Parakoimomenos Basil Lekapenos, and the Domestic Bardas Phocas over the conduct of eastern policy also characterized this period. As rebels, Skleros and Phocas actively sought the intervention of

neighboring eastern states in Byzantine affairs. However, by A.D. 990 the Emperor Basil II had won control over Byzantine foreign policy and was sufficiently in command to prevent further foreign interference in Byzantine politics.

Footnotes

¹Yahyā PO, 164/372; G. Ostrogorsky and E. Stein, "Die Krönungsordnungen des Zeremonienbuches, B, 7 (1932), 198.

²R. Grousset, L'Empire du Levant (Paris, 1949), 114, 121; Rambaud, L'Empire Grec au Xe Siècle. Constantin Porphyrogenete (Paris, 1870), 436. S. Runciman, A History of the Crusades, I (Cambridge, 1951), 32-33, sees Phocas and Tzimiskes propagating a Holy War to satisfy their own interests. See also G. Ostrogorsky, History of The Byzantine State (third ed., New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1969), 289-290.

³V. V. Bartol'd, Zapiski Kollegii Vostokovedov pri Asiatskom Muzei, Rossiiskoi Akademii Nauk, I (1925), 466-467, reprinted in Bartol'd, Sochineniia, VI (Moscow, 1966), 580, forthrightly stated that Tzimiskes never reached Palestine. This opinion appears justified now. Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 222, says that news of the victory of a certain Rayyān over Tzimiskes arrived in Cairo by June 14, 975. Rayyān had attacked Tzimiskes after he began his withdrawal from Tripoli. Since Tzimiskes was at Baalbek, May 29 (Yahyā, PO, 160/368), his entire Palestine campaign must have taken place in approximately two weeks - a very short time to have achieved all the impressive accomplishments that Tzimiskes boasts of in his letter to King Ashot, Matthew of Edessa, Chronicle, 22-30; see also Honigsmann, Ostgrenze, 102-103.

^{4c}Arqa was first captured by Nicephoros Phocas in Dhū al-Hijja, 357/October 27-November 24, 968 (Yahyā, PO, 118/816). By 996 it was again in Muslim hands when Damian Dalassenos, the newly-appointed dux of Antioch, attacked it.

⁵The north-south border is given as described in the treaty of 359/969-970 between Qarghuwayh, the ruler of Aleppo, and the trapezitos Peter [Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubdat al-Halab min Ta'rīkh Halab, ed. S. Dahān, I (Damascus, 1951), 163-165]. There is no evidence that Tzimiskes' Syrian campaign altered this border in any significant way.

⁶ Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, I, 165; Honigmann, Ostgrenze, 76-77, 95. According to N. Oikonomides, "L'organisation de la frontière orientale de Byzance aux Xe et XIe siècles et le Taktikon de l'Escorial", Actes du XVe congrès international des études Byzantines, Bucarest, 1971 (Bucharest, 1974), I, 289, there were Byzantine strategoi at Antioch, Artach, Palatza (north of Antioch?), Eirenopolis (in eastern Cilicia), Germaniceia (Mar^Cash), Adat (Hadath), and Samosata in 970-975, the dates between which Oikonomides now dates the Escorial Taktikon.

⁷ The Escorial Taktikon names Byzantine strategoi at Chasanara (Hiṣn al-Rān), Zermiou (modern Çermik; Arabic: Hiṣn al-Hamma), Erknē (modern Ergani; Arabic: Arqanīn) and far to the east at Khuwīt, which was located in the upper reaches of the Nahr al-Sarbat in the Taurus chain; Oikonomides, "L'organisation", 291-292. Oikonomides' location of Limnia is highly speculative; therefore, I have ignored it. Also, Chasanara can only tentatively be identified with modern Severek, according to Canard, Dynastie des H'amdānides, 81. Chasanara, Zermiou, and Erknē lay in a longitudinal line to the extreme west of the Diyār Bakr. Ten years later the Byzantines held a number of other fortresses in that region, including ones at Egil, Anzīt (modern Jubayr Qala^C) and Hānī, which tended to form an east-west line between Chasanara, Zermiou, Erknē on the one hand and Chouit on the other; Canard, "Deux documents arabes sur Bardas Skleros", Actes du Ve congrès d'études Byzantines. Studi Bizantini i Neoellenici V (Rome, 1939), I, 60-61, 66; it is unknown which fortresses already belonged to the Byzantines before 975 and which were added during the rebellion of Bardas Skleros. In general, on all these locations, see Canard, Dynastie des H'amdānides, 80-81.

⁸ Oikonomides, "L'organisation", 293: there were strategoi, according to the Escorial Taktikon, at Chavzizin (Havchich), Melte, Theodosiopolis, and Artze, a city on the left bank of the Araxes east of Theodosiopolis. According to Constantine Porphyrogenitos, De Administrando Imperio, ed. and trans. G. Moravcsik and R. J. H. Jenkins (Budapest, 1949), the Araxes river, which flows through the midst of Basean, formed the border in his time.

⁹ Oikonomides, "L'organisation", 293-294.

¹⁰Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, 163-168, translated in Canard, Dynastie des H'amdānides, 833-836. On Abū Taghlib's territories, see H'amdānides, 551-553, and Canard, "Les H'amdānides et l'Arménie", Annales de l'Institut d'Études Orientales-Alger, 7 (1948), 93.

¹¹Canard, Dynastie des H'amdānides, 631-632; Asolik, Histoire Universelle, trans. E. Dulaurier, (Publications de l'École Spéciale des Langues Orientales Vivantes, XVIII, Paris, 1883), III, 14:57-58.

¹²Oikonomides, "l'Organisation", 296.

¹³Skylitzes, Synopsis, 314; Yahyā, PO, 164/372; Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 79-81, #12; Honigmann, Ostgrenze, 53.

¹⁴Skylitzes, Synopsis, 315. The confusion whether Peter was actually a member of the Phocas family or not arose from an editorial error in the Bonn edition of Skylitzes-Kedrenus, corrected now by Thorn in the new Munich edition.

¹⁵Psellos, Chronographie, I, 4.

¹⁶Yahyā, PO, 167/375. On Basil Lekapenos in general, see now W. G. Brokaar, "Basil Lecapenus", Studia Byzantina et Neohellenica Neerlandica, 3 (1972), 199-234.

¹⁷Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 14: 56; Skylitzes, Synopsis; 316, 321; Yahyā, PO, 164/372; Skylitzes mentions another marriage alliance between Skleros and the amir of Amida, whom he calls Apotoulph, but Amida at this time belonged to Abū Taghlib and no figure is known at this time who might correspond to Apotoulph. See Canard, Dynastie des H'amdānides, 845, fn. 267.

¹⁸Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 81-85, #45. On the office of Basilikos (Bāsalīq), see N. Adontz, "Les Taronites en Arménie et à Byzance", B, 10 (1935), 532.

¹⁹Yahyā, PO, 164/372.

²⁰Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 85 #17.

²¹Yahyā, PO, 165/373. Rozen, Imperator Vasiliij, 86, #19, questions Yahyā's reference to the Anatolikon theme as Burtzes' lands, but Anna Comnena, Alexiade, ed. B. Lieb (Paris, 1945), III, 200, verifies Yahyā's accuracy. See also S. Vryonis, The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh through the Fifteenth Century (Berkeley-Los Angeles, 1971), 25, fn. 132.

²²Skylitzes, Synopsis, 318, gives Koukou Lithos. According to the Bonn edition of Skylitzes-Kedrenos, it is Boukou Lithos.

²³On Sahakios Vraharnios, see Adontz, "Notes Arméno-Byzantines", B, 9 (1934), 377-382.

²⁴Skylitzes, Synopsis, 319. On the location of Lykandos, Oikonomides, "L'organisation", 378, fn. 29.

²⁵G. Schlumberger, L'épopée Byzantine à la fin du Xe siècle, I (Paris, 1896), 373-374.

²⁶Yahyā, PO, 163-164/372-373; Skylitzes seems to suspect Burtzes of self-seekingly deserting to Skleros and then deserting Skleros later. Yahyā b. Sa^cīd, however, gives the impression that Burtzes sought to remain loyal to Constantinople and only went over to Skleros when he was captured. Burtzes had instructed his son, whom he left at Antioch as his deputy, to leave the town before it fell into Skleros' hands. (PO, 163-164/372-373). Burtzes later returned to the loyal army; this seems to confirm Yahyā's view of Burtzes as an unwilling accomplice of Skleros:

²⁷Skylitzes, Synopsis, 320.

²⁸W. M. Ramsay, The Historical Geography of Asia Minor (London, 1890), 140-141.

²⁹Skylitzes, Synopsis, 320.

³⁰Ibid., 321.

³¹Ibid., 321-322. According to Yahyā, PO, 166/374, Peter was killed at the battle of Lapara-Lykandos. Yahyā, however, ignores the battle at Rageas, where Skylitzes says Peter met his death. Leo Diaconus, Historiae Libri Decem, 170 agrees with Yahyā in placing Peter's death at Lapara-Lykandos, but he also ignores the battle at Rageas.

³²Skylitzes, Synopsis, 322; Leo Diaconus, Historiae Libri Decem, 170, implies that Karantenos' victory took place after the appointment of Bardas Phocas as domestic.

³³Skylitzes, Synopsis, 323.

³⁴Yahyā, PO, 166/374.

³⁵Psellos, Chronographie, I, 5; Asolikh, Histoire Universelle, III, 14: 56; Adontz, "Notes Armeno-Byzantines", B, 9 (1934), 380.

³⁶Skylitzes, Synopsis, 324-327.

³⁷Yahyā, PO, 167, 191/375, 399. 21 Sha^Cbān, 368 was actually a Monday, not a Sunday.

³⁸Leo Diaconus, Historiae Libri Decem, 170; Skylitzes, Synopsis, 326.

³⁹N. Adontz, "Tornik le Moine", B, 13 (1938), 144.

⁴⁰E. Takaichvili, "Zarzmskii monastir, ego restavratsiia i freski", Sbornik materialov dlia opisaniia mestnostei i plemen Kavkaza, 35 (1905), 19. My translation is based on Takaichvili's Russian version.

⁴¹Ramsay, Historical Geography of Asia Minor, 10, 265; Schlumberger, L'épopée Byzantine, I, 426; Adontz, "Tornik le Moine", 144-145; Honigmann, Ostgrenze, 51, fn. 6.

⁴²Skylitzes, Synopsis, 326-327; N. Adontz, "Tornik le Moine", 144, questioned - correctly, it appears to me - whether a (second) battle of Pankaleia took place, as Skylitzes proposes, on the ground that in Skylitzes' account the single combat between Skleros and Phocas is merely a

repetition of the earlier single combat between Phocas and Gabras. It is interesting to compare Skylitzes' insight into Phocas' mental processes both at the time of the last battle of the rebellion of Skleros and the final battle of his own unsuccessful rebellion. In the first case, Skylitzes, Synopsis, 326, line 92-93, wrote: "Phocas. . .decided that a glorious death is preferable to an ignoble and reproachful life." In the latter case, he writes, 337, line 10-11: "Phocas. . .bravely preferred to die nobly than to live ignobly." This comparison demonstrates the formulaic nature of these single combats, which, perhaps, as literary devices are no more genuine than the apocryphal speeches middle Byzantine chronographers insert into the mouths of their subjects. Skylitzes' version also has the advantage, from the Byzantine point of view, of denying the Iberian allies any credit for the victory of Phocas over Skleros.

Canard, Dynastie des H'amdanides, 845-846, fn. 267, raises a problem of chronology. According to him, Yahyā (191/399) and Miskawayh (II, 388) say that Abū Taghlib fled to Amida after Skleros' defeat and left Amida when Mayyāfāriqīn fell. Since Yahyā dates Skleros' defeat March 24, 979 and Mayyāfāriqīn fell about December 6, 978, Canard points out that they could not possibly be referring to Skleros' defeat at Basilika Therma. It is quite clear, however, that Yahyā is indeed referring to the final battle of Skleros' rebellion, but that he says nothing about Abū Taghlib leaving Amida at the time the Būyids captured Mayyāfāriqīn. What he says is that Abū Taghlib left Amida when Adud al-Dawla's troops had surrounded Amida. Yahyā carefully noted this error in the common source he shared with Miskawayh for the story of Abū Taghlib's flight after the defeat at Qasr al-Jass.

⁴³Vita Beati Patris Nostri Iohannis et Euthymii in P. Peeters, Histoires Monastiques Géorgiennes, Analecta Bollandiana, 36-37 (1917-1919), 21-22.

On the identity of John-Tornik, see Adontz, "Tornik le Moine", 148, 156-158 and M. Tarnishvili, "Die Anfänge der Schriftstellerischen Tätigkeit des hl. Euthymius und der Aufstand von Bardas Skleros", Oriens Christianus, 38 (1954), 121-122. However, N. Lomouri, "K Istoriia Vosstaniia Vardy Sklira", Trudy Tbilisskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta, 67 (1957), 35, repudiates the identification of the monk John-Tornik with John, sons of Sula, the author of the Zarzma inscription, which Takaichvili, "Zarzmskii

monastir", 34, proposed. Lomouri drew on the findings of M. D. Berdznishvili, "K Voprosu Ioanna-Varazvače", Trudy Instituta Istorii im. N. A. Dzavakishvili, A. N. G.S.S.R. 1 (1947), 239-249 which was unavailable to me.

⁴⁴Skylitzes, Synopsis, 326; Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 15: 59-60. Of course, only Constantinople would have had the ability to cede territories but Tornik's embassy might have gone by way of Phocas' camp or Phocas might have despatched simultaneously his own separate embassy. The question of the true origin of the mission to David is of interest principally to those wishing, for one reason or another, to determine Tornik's nationality.

⁴⁵Peeters, Histoires Monastiques Géorgiennes, 22. The quotation is my rendering of Peeters' Latin translation.

⁴⁶See fn. 8 above.

⁴⁷Adontz, "Tornik le Moine", 150-151, claims that the territories mentioned by Asolik belonged already in 978 to David of Upper Tao. V. P. Stepanenko, "Apahunik v Vizantiisko-Taoskikh Otnosheniakh v Period Miatezha Vardy Sklira (976-979)", Antichnaia drevnost i srednie veka, 10 (1973), 221-224, following Adontz, proposes that the Byzantines controlled only Theodosiopolis of the territories Asolik mentioned. Unfortunately, neither Adontz nor Stepanenko offers evidence of any kind to support his distorted thesis. A valuable contemporary source, the Escorial Taktikon, reviewed by Oikonomides, "L'organisation", 293, conclusively shows that the Byzantines occupied the region of Basean west of the Araxes and Theodosiopolis, exactly as Constantine Porphyrogenitos, D. A. I., 211-215, had written, i.e. between A.D. 950 and 952. Admittedly, Constantine's hazy idea of the geography involved contributed to subsequent misconceptions.

It is highly unlikely that David already held Khaltoyarich Kleisurawn and Ch'ormayri, which were located west northwest of Theodosiopolis, in view of their extreme western location and the state of the Byzantine-Iberian dispute over the remains of the amirate of Theodosiopolis. The canton of Mardali, in which Sevuk was located, was south of Theodosiopolis and west of the Araxes. Asolik's statement is sufficient proof to conclude, in the absence of contrary evidence, that all the territories in question except for Hark^C and Apahunik^C, which Constantine Porphyrogenitos considered legal dependencies of Byzantium, were in Byzantine possession.

⁴⁸Constantine Porphyrogenitos, D.A.I., 212-215.

⁴⁹N. Adontz, Armenia in the Period of Justinian, trans. and ed. N. G. Garsoian (Lisbon, 1970), 20, 112-113. Z. Avalichvili, "La succession du curopalate David d'Ibérie, dynaste de Tao", B, 8 (1933), 185-186.

⁵⁰Constantine Porphyrogenitos, D.A.I., 202-205.

⁵¹Peeters, Histoires Monastiques Géorgiennes, 22; Aristakes Lastiverts'i, Recit des Malheurs de la Nation Arménienne, trans. M. Canard and H. Berberian, (Brussels, 1973), 21; Z. Avalichvili, "Succession", 177; Adontz, "Tornik le Moine", 151; R. Grousset, Histoire de l'Arménie des Origines a 1071 (Paris, 1947), 506; Schlumberger, L'Epopée Byzantine, I, 420, II, 163-164.

⁵²Constantine Porphyrogenitos, D.A.I., 210-211.

⁵³Peeters, Histoires Monastiques Géorgiennes, 20.

⁵⁴V. P. Stepanenko, "Apahunik v Vizantiisko-Taoskikh Otnosheniakh", 222-223, proposed that the Byzantine objective in making nominal cessions of territories that it did not actually control was to draw David of Upper Tao into a clash with the Marwānids. It is uncertain, however, whether the Marwānids had even occupied Hark^C and Apahunik^C yet. More worthy of notice is the implication of Stepanenko's argument: that the Byzantines could manipulate David like a child. Obviously, considerable political gifts were necessary to his immensely successful life and achievements in the exceptionally difficult conditions of Caucasian society.

⁵⁵Leo Diaconus, Historiae Libri Decem, 169, and Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 14:56, say that the rebellion of Skleros lasted four years. It may have taken place in parts of four calendar years, but its duration was approximately three years. On P^Cshap^Cshat see Honigmann, Ostgrenze, 152-153.

⁵⁶N. Lomouri, "K Istorii Vosstaniia Vardy Sklira", 35.

⁵⁷Miskawayh, Tajārib al-Umam, II, 369. The date, 19 Safar, 369/September 15, 979, which Ibn Shaddād proposes for the fall of Mayyāfāriqīn, claiming the authority of Ibn al-Azraq al-Fāriqī [See his Ta'rīkh al-Fāriqī, ed. B. A. L. ^CAwad, (Cairo, 1959) Arabic introduction, 305] does not accord in any way with Miskawayh's chronology.

⁵⁸Miskawayh, Tajārib al-Umam, II, 391.

⁵⁹Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, 163-168.

⁶⁰See above: Chapter Three on al-Shimshāṭī.

⁶¹Yahyā, PO, 190/398; Canard, Dynastie des H'amdanides, 678.

⁶²Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, 172, says under A.H. 367/977-978 that 'Sa^Cd al-Dawla changed the call to prayer in Aleppo, adding to it [the specifically Fātimid formula] "Hasten to the best of works. Muhammad and ^CAlī are the best of mankind," and it is said that this was done in 369 and in 358.' A.H. 358 was November 25, 968-November 13, 969. Ibn al-^CAdīm's information contradicts Yahyā, PO, 190/398, for the year 368/978-979, in which Yahyā says that Abū al-Ma^Cālī gave the khutba to ^CAdud al-Dawla. Yahyā's version agrees with the political constellation of that time when ^CAdud al-Dawla had brought Būyid political power to the border of the amirate of Aleppo. The Fātimids to the contrary were suffering an eclipse in southern and central Syria. However, Ibn al-^CAdīm's statement concerning the call to prayer being given according to the Fātimid formula best fits the events of 358/968-969 or 359/969-970 when the Fātimids first propelled themselves into the chaotic political situation in north Syria, following Sayf al-Dawla's death and the Byzantine invasions during Nicephoros Phocas' reign.

⁶³Miskawayh, Tajārib al-Umam, II, 392.

⁶⁴Ibid., 409.

⁶⁵N. Abbott, "Two Būyid Coins in the Oriental Institute", the American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures, 56 (1939), 350-364. Al-^CUtbī, an eleventh-century historian of the Ghaznavid dynasty of eastern Iran and Afghanistan, says on the professed authority of Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm al-Ṣābī that Mufarrij b. Daghfal b. al-Jarrāh had been won over by ^CAdud al-Dawla and for this reason he killed Abū Taghlib when he fell into his hands. al-^CUtbī, Kitāb al-Yamīnī in al-Manīnī, al-Fath al-Wahbī ^CAlā Ta'rīkh al-^CUtbī (Cairo, n.d.), II, 112.

⁶⁶Ibn al-Qalānisī, Dhayl Ta'rīkh Dimashq, 23; Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 252, also says that ^CAdud al-Dawla planned to invade Egypt.

⁶⁷On these negotiations, see especially J. Christoph Bürgel, Die Hofkorrespondenz ^CAdud al-Daulas (Wiesbaden, 1965), 147-152, where further citations are given. Also Ibn Zāfir, Akhbār al-Duwal al-Munqati^Ca, (Ferré), 33-35. However, Bürgel has not succeeded in reaching any satisfactory conclusions from the highly confusing documents and statements that exist concerning these negotiations.

⁶⁸Ibn Zāfir, Akhbār al-Duwal al-Munqati^Ca, 34, places a rather picturesque story of the theft of a silver lion from the prow of ^CAdud al-Dawla's royal barge (zabzab) in the year 371/981-982. Ibn al-Jawzī, al-Muntazam, VII, 107, says that the lion was stolen in Ṣafar, 371. See also al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, 261. The original source of this story was probably Hilāl al-Ṣābī. Although the story is in all likelihood apocryphal, the date itself may have some significance. N. Abbott, "Two Būyid Coins", 355, concluded from her study of these negotiations, "It is not surprising that nothing came of these attempts at rapprochement."

⁶⁹Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 14: 57-58.

⁷⁰Abū Shujā^C al-Rūdhrawarī, Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam, 38.

⁷¹Miskawayh, Tajārib al-Umam, II, 396-397.

⁷²Skylitzes, Synopsis, 327; Yahyā, PO, 192-194/400-402. Abū Shujā^C al-Rūdhrāwarī, Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam, III, 29, leaves this ambassador nameless in his list of Byzantine ambassadors, 979-983. It seems unlikely that so high a functionary as Nicephoros Uranos would have been sent on such an errand and, if so, that he would not have been mentioned somewhere in Ibn Shahrām's report, as it was Nicephoros Uranos who accompanied Ibn Shahrām back to Baghdad but under altered circumstances.

⁷³Miskawayh, Tajārib al-Umam, II, 397.

⁷⁴Abū Shujā^C al-Rūdhrāwarī, Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam, 12, Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, VIII, 704; Yahyā, PO, 192/400.

⁷⁵Abū Shujā^C, Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam, 29-39.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, on points a and b: 30, 32; on point c; 39; on d: 33, 39.

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, 35.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, 35-36.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, 29, 35-36; Ibn Qūnus had received a draft in Greek which apparently provided for the surrender of Skleros. It is not clear what the Buyids expected to receive in return besides the fortresses which the Byzantines had taken in the Diyār Bakr. When Ibn Shahrām arrived in Constantinople, however, he claimed that he had no instructions authorizing him to negotiate the surrender of Skleros.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, 29, 30, exposed by Ibn Shahrām, 30.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, 30, 32, 34-35.

⁸²Skylitzes, Synopsis, 328.

⁸³Abū Shujā^C, Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam, 29.

⁸⁴Ibid., 34; cf. Neumann, Die Weltstellung des Byzantinischen Reiches vor den Kreuzzügen (Berlin, 1894), 24, 62-63.

⁸⁵Abū Shujā^C, Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam, 29-30.

⁸⁶Ibid., 37.

⁸⁷Ibid., 34-35.

⁸⁸This appears to be the sense of the phrase "wa mulkuk la yubqī nafsak al-rūm famā yubālūn hadhā inna lam yataharaku huwa binafsihi." Ibid., 35. Margoliouth comments that the text is corrupt at this point.

⁸⁹Kharāj here appears to have the same meaning as jizya (poll tax) as used in the Byzantine-Aleppan treaty of 359/969. See fn. 59.

⁹⁰Yahyā, PO, 192/400.

⁹¹Abū Shujā^C, Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam, 38.

⁹²Ibid., 38.

⁹³Bürgel, Hofkorrespondenz, 154-156, paraphrasing ^CAbd al-^CAzīz b. Yūsuf al-Shirāzī, "Letter concerning the Peace Treaty with the Byzantines", Rasā'il (letters), ms. Peterman 406, Ahlwardt 8625, Berlin, 16b-17b.

⁹⁴Yahyā, PO, 199/407; Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, 173-174.

⁹⁵Abū Shujā^C, Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam, 29.

⁹⁶Ibid., 33.

⁹⁷Contrary to the opinion of Margoliouth, Eclipse of the Abbasid Caliphate, VI, 34, fn. 1, when Ibn Shahrām speaks of the treaty negotiated by Nicephoros Uranos, he is not talking of an agreement concluded in 369/979-980 at the time of Nicephoros Uranos' presumed first embassy to Baghdad.

⁹⁸Abū Shujā^C, Dhayl Tajarib al-Umam, 38.

⁹⁹Yahyā, PO, 193/401.

¹⁰⁰The letter of al-Shirāzī, paraphrased in Bürgel, Hofkorrespondenz, 155-156, is important evidence of the validity and contemporaneity of Ibn Shahrām's tadhkira.

¹⁰¹Yahyā, PO, 209/417. He is the only source for the date of the Parakoimomenos' downfall.

¹⁰²Yahyā, PO, 202-203/410-411; H. Busse, Chalif und Grosskönig Die Buyiden im Iraq (945-1055) (Beirut, 1969), 61-67.

¹⁰³Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, IX, 35-36, 38-39; Abū Shujā^C, Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam, 84-87; Ibn al-Azraq al-Fāriqī, Ta'rīkh al-Fāriqī, 51-52.

¹⁰⁴Canard, "Deux documents arabes sur Bardas Skleros", 59.

¹⁰⁵Yahyā, PO, 193/401; Skylitzes, Synopsis, 327; Zonaras, Epitomē Historiōn, IV, 109-110.

¹⁰⁶Ibn al-Azraq, Ta'rīkh al-Fāriqī, B. M. 5803, 119v.

¹⁰⁷Yahyā, PO, 199/401; Abū Shujā^C, Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam, 29. Skylitzes, Synopsis, 321, indicates that at least one payment was made during the rebellion of Skleros.

¹⁰⁸Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd, PO, 203-204/411-412; al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 256; Ibn al-Qalānisī, Dhayl Ta'rīkh Dimashq, 25.

¹⁰⁹Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd, PO, 204-205/412-413; Ibn al-Qalānisī, Dhayl Ta'rīkh Dimashq, 25, 29; al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 258; Ibn Zāfir, Akhbār al-Duwal al-Munqati^Ca, B. M. 3685, 18v; Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, 174-176; Ibn al-

^CAdīm claims that Bardas Phocas arrived at Aleppo Thursday, 17 Rabī^C II, 373/September 28, 983.

¹¹⁰Yahyā, PO, 143, 205/351, 413; al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 259; Ibn al-Qalānisī, Dhayl Ta'rīkh Dimashq, 29, Ibn Zāfir, Akhbār al-Duwal al-Munqati^Ca, 19r; Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 158, #125, Canard, Dynastie des H'amdanides, 850-851.

¹¹¹Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, 178.

¹¹²Yahyā, PO, 164/372.

¹¹³Ibid., 164, 198-199, 208-209/372, 406-407, 416-417.

¹¹⁴Ibid., 209-210/417-418; Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, 174-177. Canard, Dynastie des H'amdanides, 851-852, wishes to relate this campaign to the guarantee Bardas Phocas gave the Emperors Basil and Constantine, quoted by Ibn al-^CAdīm under A.H. 373, that he would conquer Aleppo, raze its walls stone by stone, and transport the population to Constantinople. Canard thinks that the new tactic adopted by the Byzantines - a generalized attack on all the territories of Aleppo - could not represent a simple attempt to collect the tax. However, Ibn al-^CAdīm is not a trustworthy source of information for internal Byzantine affairs. His story is probably only the echo of a local version of events, based on a hysterical rumor, and, in any case, his narrative completely confuses the events of A.H. 373 and A.H. 375.

¹¹⁵Abū Shujā^C, Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam, 29, 33-34, 37.

¹¹⁶Yahyā, PO, 209/417.

¹¹⁷Skylitzes, Synopsis, 330-332; Yahyā, PO, 211/419, gives the date.

¹¹⁸Yahyā, PO, 211/419.

¹¹⁹Al-Qalqashandī, Subh al-A^Cshā (Cairo, 1913-1919), XIV, 20: M. Canard, "Deux documents arabes sur Bardas Skleros", 65-68, gives an improved translation of the treaty.

¹²⁰Canard, "Deux documents arabes," 60-61, locates the first six fortresses. N. Oikonomides, "L'organisation," 292, has identified the seventh, Ḥiṣn al-H.n.d.r.s., with the Orthodox bishopric of Chantiarti in Arshamunik^C. For two reasons Oikonomides' identification cannot be accepted. The first is that in the Byzantine-Būyid negotiations preceding Skleros' release, the Būyids had demanded the surrender of fortresses which the Byzantines held in the Diyār Bakr. As the six fortresses besides Ḥiṣn al-H.n.d.r.s., mentioned in the agreement with Skleros, were all in the Diyār Bakr, it is obvious that the Būyids were seeking from Skleros what they had not been able to obtain from Constantinople. Since Chantiarti is north of both the Diyār Bakr and even the Arsanas, it could not have been included on the list of fortresses Skleros promised to surrender to the Būyids. Second, H.n.d.r.s. is a provisional reading; that means that there is at least one alternative reading for each letter in this toponym. On Chantiarti, see Honigmann, Ostgrenze, 196.

¹²¹Skleros promised to fulfill all his promises from when he first arrived in the Byzantine Empire until (and after) that moment when he became master of all his possessions: Canard, "Deux documents arabes," 66.

¹²²Skylitzes, Synopsis, 334, Zonaras, Epitomē, IV, 113, claim that Skleros and his followers fled back to Byzantine territory. There is verification neither for this story nor that, told by Skylitzes, Synopsis, 332-334, Zonaras, Epitomē, IV, 112-113, Psellos, Chronographie, 7-8, which says ^CAdud al-Dawla originally released Skleros and his followers from imprisonment because he wished to employ their military skills against the Persians, whom they crushed. The latter story corresponds to no known event of ^CAdud al-Dawla's or Ṣamsām al-Dawla's reign. ^CAdud al-Dawla would have been dead by the time of their release. Yahyā, PO, 211/419, confirms the Baghdad account of Skleros' release.

¹²³Abū Shujā^C, Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam, 112-113; Hilāl al-Ṣābī, Rusūm Dār al-Khilāfa, ed. M. ^CAwwād, (Baghdad, 1964), 14-17.

¹²⁴Yahyā, PO, 211-212/419-420; Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 24: 128. It is difficult to understand how Skleros was within his pledge to Šamsām al-Dawla not to befriend the enemies of the Būyids when he solicited Bād's aid. In 984 Bād had taken the Diyār Bakr from the Būyids and in the reign of Sharaf al-Dawla (376-379/987-989) he tried to deprive them of Nišībīn. Perhaps, the Būyids temporarily considered Bād friendly as a result of the treaty signed with him in 374/984-985.

¹²⁵Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 25: 129; Yahyā, PO, 212/420.

¹²⁶Yahyā, PO, 209-210/417-418.

¹²⁷Ibid., 213-215/421-423.

¹²⁸Skylitzes, Synopsis, 332.

¹²⁹Ibid., 332, line 67-68; 334, line 37-39; 334-335, chapter 16; 335-336, line 71-72. Also Psellos, Chronographie, 8.

¹³⁰Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 25: 129.

¹³¹Abū Shujā^C, Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam, 37.

¹³²Skylitzes, Synopsis, 336, identifies the fortress in which Phocas imprisoned Skleros; Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 25: 129, gives it the name Jerāws. Ramsay, Historical Geography, 141-142, equated Turopoion with Turaion near modern Ilghin on the Konya-Afyon highway.

¹³³Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 25: 129.

¹³⁴Leo Diaconus, Historiae Libri Decem, 173; Skylitzes, Synopsis, 336.

¹³⁵Yahyā, PO, 215-216/423-424; Skylitzes, Synopsis, 336.

¹³⁶Ibn Taghrībirdī, al-Nujūm al-Zāhira, IV, 151-152; Muhammad b. Ahmad al-^CAynī (d. 755/1354), ^CIqd al-Jumān, cited by Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 203, fn. c.

¹³⁷Yahyā, PO, 216/424. Adontz, "Les Taronites à Byzance," B, 11 (1936), 22, proposes the identification Gregory Taronites, who is known to have held the office of magister in 991.

¹³⁸Yahyā, PO, 216/424. Yahyā calls David the "King of Georgia" but, in fact, while he was the leading political figure in Georgia at this time, he held only the title of Duke of Upper Tao.

¹³⁹Ibid., 424. Who were the two sons of Bagrat? Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 79-81, #12, thought that al-Khālidiyāt must lie somewhere in the province of Taraun, which was annexed by the Empire in 966 after the death of the prince of Taraun, Ashot. His two sons Gregory and Bagrat were given the rank of patricians at that time. (Skylitzes, Synopsis, 279). If the sons of Bagrat were the sons of Bagrat, the son of Ashot, as Schlumberger, L'Epopée, I, 747, and Honigmann, Ostgrenze, 149, believe, they were opposing a Taronitēs, whom Adontz (see above, fn. 137) believes was their uncle Gregory. However, Adontz, "Les Taronites en Arménie et à Byzance," B, 10 (1935), 543, suggests that the names of Bagrat's sons were Bagrat and Ćordvanel on the authority of John Lazaropoulos, a fourteenth century Greek author. See Sbornik Istochnikov po Istorii Trapezundskoi Imperii, ed. A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus (St. Petersburg, 1897), 82. However, none of these conclusions can be definitively proven. Adontz equates al-Khālidiyāt with Chaldia but not actually with the Byzantine Chaldian theme.

¹⁴⁰Histoire de la Géorgie, ed. M. F. Brosset (St. Petersburg, 1849), I, 292.

¹⁴¹According to the Georgian Royal Annals, Histoire de la Géorgie, I, 296-297, David explained to Bagrat that he had information that Bagrat sought to kill him. Bagrat defended himself by claiming that he was actually marching against a disobedient vassal. This story fails to explain why David was susceptible to stories maligning his adopted son. Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 28, 134-135, says

that Bagrat III's grandfather, Bagrat II the Simple (d. 994), had married a new wife who had chased her husband's son Gurgen, the father of Bagrat III, from his hereditary lands. Why did David take Bagrat II's side in the affair?

¹⁴²Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 28: 135.

¹⁴³Yahyā, PO, 216-217/424-425; Lomouri, "K Istoriia Vostaniia Vaṛdy Sklira," 41-44, suggests that in 988-989 David supported the rebels, as opposed to the aid he gave the central government in 978-979, first because of the Georgian princes' traditional disregard of their nominal vassalage to the Emperor, especially at the end of the tenth century when David was trying to bring about the unification of the Georgian kingdoms under one government. "David finally must have understood that the unification of Georgia could not be beneficial for Byzantium and that it would wholly impede this process. . . The situation of the Empire itself must have favored completely the inclination of the Georgian ruler." Second, David had no desire that the lands ceded to him by Byzantium should be retroceded after his death. A weakened Byzantium and especially a ruler in debt to him on the throne, that is, Phocas, would contribute most to his goal. Finally, the personal friendship between David and Phocas definitely affected his decision.

However, Lomouri fails to explain why David's aid to Phocas was so meager and why it was so quickly withdrawn. Both Basil and Phocas would have been beholden to David for his support. At the time, it was unclear whether Georgian interests would have been better served by a great eastern magnate and proven soldier on the throne or a young and inexperienced emperor who was essentially an unknown quantity.

In the view of H. M. Bartikian, "La Conquête de l'Arménie par l'Empire Byzantin," Revue des Études Armeniennes, n. s. 8 (1971), 332-333, David had simply been fooled by Basil's offer of territorial concessions in 978. A decade later he had finally come to understand the goal (i.e. annexation of Caucasia) of Basil's policy and was forced to support Phocas in his rebellion.

¹⁴⁴Skylitzes, Synopsis, 336; Leo Diaconus, Historiae Libri Decem, 173-174, Psellos, Chronographie, 9;

Yahyā, PO, 216/424; Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 25, 129-130. The Greek authors Skylitzes and Leo Diaconus claim that Nicephoros Phocas was captured at Chrysopolis, in which case he could hardly have taken part in the

victory over the magister Taronitēs which Yahyā attributes to him, unless, of course, Yahyā is incorrect about the simultaneity of these events.

¹⁴⁵On this date, Yahyā, PO, 217/425; Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 209, #163; Asolik to some degree confirms Yahyā, placing the battle at Chrysopolis in Arm. E. 437, which ended March 23, 989.

¹⁴⁶Skylitzes, Synopsis, 337; Psellos, Chronographie, 10-11, especially chapter 16. Leo Diaconus, Historiae Libri Decem, 174-175. On Skylitzes' use of the single combat as a literary mechanism, see fn. 45 above.

¹⁴⁷Yahyā, PO, 218/416, gives the date, the month, and the year which Skylitzes, Synopsis, 338, and Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 26: 131, (partially) confirm.

¹⁴⁸Psellos, Chronographie, 16.

¹⁴⁹Ibid., 15, chapter 25.

¹⁵⁰Ibid., 14-18, chapters 23-29; Skylitzes, Synopsis, 338-339; Zonaras, Epitomē, IV, 116-117; Yahyā, PO, 218-219/426-427. On al-Amīnāfwīn see Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 212-213, #169.

¹⁵¹Yahyā, PO, 222-223/430-431; Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 227-228, #181-182.

CHAPTER 8

BYZANTINE EASTERN POLICY, 990-1000:

CONSOLIDATION AND DECISION

While the rebellion of Bardas Phocas engulfed Anatolia in war, the Bulgarian ruler Samuel was ravaging the Byzantine provinces in Europe. Once Basil II had defeated the Anatolian forces disputing his right to rule rather than to merely reign over Byzantium, the pre-eminent objective of his policy became the restoration of Byzantine sovereignty in Bulgaria. It was there that his most glorious achievements were made. From them came the name "Bulgarslayer" by which posterity has known him. For almost thirty years, sometimes in all four seasons of the year, Basil II personally waged war against the Bulgarians.

The preoccupation with Bulgaria in Basil II's strategic scheme was also the most important characteristic of his eastern policy. The continuing warfare in Bulgaria must have engaged most of Byzantium's military resources. Therefore, Byzantine policy in Anatolia and on the eastern frontier in the 990's was limited to modest objectives. These were first of all the reimposition of

Byzantine sovereignty where it had been recognized prior to the rebellion of Bardas Phocas and, secondly, the secure maintenance of the pre-rebellion borders. This second factor included the preservation of the Byzantine protectorate over Aleppo. It also would lead in 1000 to the annexation of the territories which David of Upper Tao had united under his rule. However, the principles that were to guide Basil II's eastern policy were far less clear in 990 than they were to be at the end of the decade.

The Settlement with David and the Occupation of His Lands

After the battle of Abydos Antioch remained in the hands of the rebels. Leo Phocas, the son of Bardas Phocas, held out in a well-fortified tower at the highest point of the city wall. The main body of his supporters were local Armenians and Muslims. When the people of Antioch themselves banded together against Leo Phocas, they managed to force his surrender, November 3, 989, after four days of fighting. Antioch thus came under the rule of the Emperor, who appointed Michael Burtzes as its governor.¹

In resentment of the aid that David, the Duke of Upper Tao, and the two sons of Bagrat had given Phocas, Basil II sent a certain al-Jakrūs against them in 379/ April 11, 989-May 30, 990, according to Yahyā b. Sa^cīd. The elder of the two sons of Bagrat was killed in battle against al-Jakrūs. The younger son was then sent into exile.

Al-Jakrūs is a mysterious figure. This is the only time his name comes to light in the sources. It is tempting, however, to identify him, as does N. Adontz, with Jan Portiz, who, Asolik says, was campaigning at almost the same time--Arm. E. 439/March 24, 990-March 23, 991--in western Armenia. In the second of two battles against Jan Portiz Asolik says that a certain Čordvanel, who remained in control of the region of Terjan and Taraun, was killed. He was an Armenian who held the imperial rank of magister. Because of his title and his possession of Taraun, N. Adontz proposed to identify him with the elder of the two sons of Bagrat, who had supplied 1000 horsemen to Phocas. Čordvanel's lands must have reverted to imperial control since they lay within the Empire's pre-987 borders. With this battle peace finally returned to the Empire, according to Asolik.²

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd says that David of Upper Tao contacted Basil II, requesting a pardon and tendering his obedient submission. As David was an old man without son or heir, Yahyā states, he offered to cede all the lands of his state after his death to the Byzantine Emperor. He asked that Basil receive an embassy of notables in order that they could give him pledges concerning the terms agreed upon, including the transfer of Upper Tao to Byzantine possession.³

The Emperor Basil II was satisfied with David's proposal and accepted it. In acknowledgement he conferred

upon David the title of curopalates, which was accompanied by magnificent gifts. Thereafter, Basil II was recognized as sovereign in Upper Tao and David's other lands. A second embassy from David, including the Katholikos of the Iberian church and many of David's vassals, visited the Byzantine court. Basil conferred imperial ranks upon the Armenians and Georgians and treated them handsomely. Undoubtedly, they were the recipients of many more fine gifts.⁴ Thus, it appears that Basil II was intent from the first on forming a pro-Byzantine party in David's state.

This description given by Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd of the settlement reached between David and Basil II is of great significance for understanding subsequent Byzantine-Caucasian relations. First of all, it shows that the aid which David had provided to Phocas, even though slight, had angered Basil II, whose severe sense of justice became legendary.⁵ In other words, it was not the effect of David's intervention, which was negligible, but the act itself--the inherently disloyal act of a subject toward his sovereign--which incited the wrath of the Emperor. Later in his reign Basil II came to stress the importance of the tie of loyalty implied in the swearing of cliency and servitude to one's sovereign. Basil twice refused to support rebels against the Fāṭimid caliph on the grounds that they were contravening their oaths of loyalty.⁶

Second, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd is the only chronicler to mention this agreement. Otherwise, the Greek, Armenian,

and Georgian historiography ignore it. Most importantly, Yahyā's information explains why after the death of David ten years later Basil II moved quickly to occupy all of David's lands, not simply those which he had conditionally ceded to the Duke of Upper Tao in 978 for the duration of his life and why the Emperor encountered no resistance in occupying them.

Can Yahyā's account then be considered an official rationalization after the fact for Byzantine actions in annexing David's lands? To the contrary, he was a provincial historian, writing in Antioch, a city far distant from Constantinople, the policy-making center of the Empire. While he may have taken information from Constantinopolitan sources, there is no reason to consider him a witting vehicle for propaganda. Therefore, Yahyā's account must be considered individual, not official.

Some scholars have questioned Yahyā b. Sa^cīd's statement that when David ceded his territories to the Emperor in about 990-991 he had neither a son nor an heir. As we have seen (see Chapter 7), David had adopted Bagrat III as his son and heir in about 978 as part of a bilateral agreement with the Regent of Abkhazia. The intended effect of this agreement was to unite the Kingdoms of Abkhazia and Iberia plus the states belonging to David of Upper Tao under Bagrat III's rule. We owe this information to the Georgian Royal Annals.⁷

However, the Armenian chroniclers Asolik and Vardan Vardapet confirm Yahyā's assertion that David died sonless; Asolik says that also no brother survived David.⁸

Therefore, it appears that by the time David of Upper Tao reached an agreement with Basil II concerning reparation for his aid to Phocas (at the latest) Bagrat III's rights of inheritance to David's lands had been abrogated. Neither the Georgian Royal Annals nor any other Georgian source suggests that when the Emperor occupied the lands which had formed the core of David's state, he was usurping Bagrat III's rights. Moreover, Basil II met no resistance from Bagrat III in carrying out the annexation.⁹

Thus, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's account of the cession made by David of the Bagratid dynasty's claims to the lands he had united in his individual possession appears accurate. With this the seed of further Byzantine involvement in Caucasian affairs was planted.

Events in Armenia in the 990's revolved around David, now holder of the imperial title of curopalates. Between 992-994 he was finally ready to take advantage of the Byzantine cession to him of the province of Apahunik^C. This cession had amounted to Byzantine acknowledgement of David's right of conquest since Byzantine sovereignty over Apahunik^C was solely by virtue of the tribute its former rulers--originally the Qaysid dynasty and subsequently

Bād b. Dustūk--had previously paid to the Emperor. The ten-year treaty of peace signed in 382/992-992 between the Byzantines and the Marwānid dynasty--founded by the nephew of Bād b. Dūstuk--apparently afforded it no protection against David's ambitions on Marwānid possessions in Apahunik^C. Having successfully besieged Manzikert and overwhelmed the defenders, the Curopolates exiled the city's Arab population, which he then replaced with loyal Iberians and Armenians.

David's actions incited the wrath of a powerful neighbor to the east of Armenia, Abū al-Hayjā' Mamlān (d. 391/1000), the Rawwādid amir of Azarbayjan. However, David managed to weather the ensuing storm with the help of a coalition composed of Gagik, King of Armenia (989-1016/1020), Abas, King of Kars (984-1029), and Bagrat II, known as Bagrat the Simple, titular King of Iberia (958-994). According to Asolik, the camp of the Armeno-Georgian force was so imposing to look on that Mamlān was afraid even to initiate battle.¹⁰

The Iberian conquest of Manzikert took place after the Byzantines had besieged the city in 382/March 9, 992-February 25, 993 and prior to Bagrat II's death in 994.¹¹

In the winter of 997-998 David attempted to seize Khlat^C, the Marwānid city lying at the northwest corner of Lake Van, but the amir Mumahhid al-Dawla came to its rescue and prevented its capture. This time it was the Iberian

army that gave way in confusion and panic without ever having become involved in battle. The date was Easter night, 998.¹²

In Arm. E. 447/998-999 the Rawwādid amir Mamlān again set out across Vaspurakan toward Manzikert. Gagik, the King of Armenia, and Gurgēn, who had succeeded his father in 994 as King of Iberia, sent armies to join those of Upper Tao and the Armenian kingdom of Vanand (Kars) in resisting Mamlān. Near the village of Cumb, northwest of Archēsh, Mamlān was again repelled.¹³

Thus, David succeeded in annexing Manzikert and Apahunik^C but failed in the attempt to annex the major cities of Hark^C. However, these campaigns raise an important question which has never been convincingly resolved. If the Curopolates was pledged to yield his lands to Byzantium after his death, why did he wish to add more territory to them? This important issue, which N. Adontz pointed out, deserves a solution, but none seems wholly satisfactory. Although David's actions appear without motive, his behavior does not mean that his agreement with Basil II simply did not exist.¹⁴ For substantial evidence from other sources supports Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd's assertion that David alienated his property to Basil. Skylitzes explicitly states that David had named the Emperor his heir. The Armenians Asolik and Vardan Vardapet likewise confirm that David had left his possessions to Basil.¹⁵

As we have seen earlier, the statement that David had at one point made his nephew Bagrat his heir occurs only in the Georgian Royal Annals.¹⁶ However, the Annals also mention that David named Basil II as his heir; they fail to point out that this act amounted to the disinheri-
tance of Bagrat III (unless, of course, his disinheri-
tance had taken place at an earlier date). Therefore, the accuracy of Yahyā's information appears unimpeachable.

David died on March 31, 1000. The cause may have been a simple case of old age. David had refrained from personally leading the opposition to Mamlān's invasion of Apahunik^C in 998-999 on account of his age.¹⁷ Nevertheless, Aristakes Lastiverts'i and Matthew of Edessa claim that the Curopolates' death was the result of foul play. Aristakes says that members of the lesser nobility (the azat) had conspired to poison the communion wine "because they were discontented with his actions and had put their hopes in the promises which the Emperor had made to them before."¹⁸

Matthew of Edessa, however, states that the "homicidal mass" which the Patriarch Hilarion prepared in collaboration with the greats of the court was a failure. David was immediately aware that he had drunk poison and took an antidote. Strangely, David, according to Matthew of Edessa, never divulged that the Patriarch had tried to poison him. Given another chance, the Patriarch succeeded in smothering David with a pillow while he slept.¹⁹

The most obvious clue to the unreliability of these two stories is that they contradict each other. Moreover, neither Asolik, a contemporary who served as a source for Aristakes, nor Sumbat, the contemporary Georgian chronicler, in mentioning the death of David, says that it resulted from murder.²⁰ Matthew of Edessa's story is improbable in that it credits David with ignoring the first attempt on his life although fully cognizant of it. Finally, since poison leaves no wounds, an empty rumor or malicious whisper is enough to give rise to such a charge. No proof or evidence of any kind is necessary for an historian to insinuate poison as the cause of death. Therefore, the idea that David was a victim of a conspiracy organized by the Byzantine emperor should be rejected.²¹

The news of David's death reached Basil II at Tarsos in Cilicia where he had spent the past six months with his army after the end of the Syrian campaign in December, 999.²² It was in mid or late June that Basil II set out from Tarsos to occupy the ceded lands. A military contingent, which included at least the Russian unit, accompanied him. Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd reports that Nicephoros Uranos, the governor of Antioch, followed in the Emperor's path with more troops.

The Emperor proceeded by way of Melitene, Hanzit, Balu on the Arsanas river, and the mountain of Koher (Koher Dagħ on the Göinük su) to Erēz in Arshamunik^C.

Asolik, who is the only informant for the route Basil II took, says that he arrived on the Feast of the Transfiguration (July 7, 1000) at Koher Dagħ. The meeting which followed at Erēz between Basil II and Mumahhid al-Dawla, the Marwānid amir, thus occurred after July 7, 1000.²³

In return for acknowledgement of his sovereignty by Mumahhid al-Dawla, Basil II granted him the rank of magister and the office of dux of the east (dhuqas al-mashriq) and ordered that the troops of western Armenia and Taraun should give aid to the Marwānids if Mumahhid al-Dawla summoned them. Thereby the Marwānids became another client dynasty on the empire's southeastern border.²⁴ Ostensibly, this agreement, along with the death of the Curopolates David, put an end to warfare between the Christian Armenians and Georgians and the Muslim Marwānids for possession of the north shore of Lake Van. As formerly, all these cities--Khlat^c, Archēsh, and Berkri--remained in Muslim hands.

From Erēz Basil II turned north toward Chavzizin (Havchich) located on the Bingol Dagħ, where he received Bagrat III, king of Abkhazia, and his father, Gurgēn of Iberia. On the former Basil II conferred the rank of curopolates, on the latter the lesser rank of magister.

While the Georgian kings were meeting with Basil at Chavzizin (Havchich), fighting broke out between the nobles of the deceased Curopolates' court and Basil II's Russian

contingent, which, according to Asolik, numbered 6,000 infantrymen at this time.²⁵ The Russians had the best of the skirmish which had begun in a quarrel over some forage. At least thirty of the nobles (azat) of Upper Tao were killed.²⁶

When Basil II was already marching away from Havchich, he saw coming toward him Abas, the young King of Vanand (Kars), and Senacherim, Prince of Rshtuniq^c. Senacherim was one of the two surviving sons of Abusahl-Hamazasp, King of Vaspurakan, 953-972. Later, his elder brother Gurgen (d. 1003), prince of Antzevatsik^c and titular King of Vaspurakan, came also to pay homage to Basil II. The Emperor richly rewarded them for recognizing his sovereignty. His presents included horses, mules, gold, and splendid robes. In addition, Asolik states that Basil II sent embassies to the neighboring Muslimes amirs, warning them to cease raiding the Kingdom of Vaspurakan. The amirs in question were probably those of the Rawwādids of Azarbayjan and the Marwānids of Diyār Bakr. This initiative on the part of Senacherim and his brother Gurgen reveals that already in A.D. 1000 the kingdom of Vaspurakan viewed itself as a dependency of the Byzantine empire.²⁷ The willingness of the kings of Iberia, Abkhazia, Vanand, and Vaspurakan to acknowledge the primacy of the Byzantine empire doubtlessly no more than fulfilled the expectations of Basil II concerning the proper conduct of a king. Like

other Byzantines, he certainly believed in an ideology that proclaimed a hierarchy among states, at the apex of which was the Byzantine empire.²⁸ The same world view is evident in the concept of a terrestrial family of kings, in which the Byzantine emperor was the father with the patria potestas.²⁹ In acknowledging the sovereignty of Basil II, the Caucasian royalty had complied with the demands of Byzantine ideology. Probably, the Byzantine annexation of the territories of the former Duke of Upper Tao, which made the Empire contiguous to their own realms, was the most important factor in influencing the Georgian and Armenian kings to accept Byzantine sovereignty.

One member of the Armenian royalty, in fact, the most important member, Gagik of Ani, the Bagratid King of Kings, refused to pay homage to Basil II, who had paused at Valarshakert in Bagrevand in expectation of his arrival but to no avail.

From Valarshakert the Emperor proceeded to Olt^Ci (Armenian Ukht^Cik^C), the capital of Upper Tao, which had been the center of David's state. Basil II occupied the numerous castles and fortresses of Upper Tao and appointed new officials to replace the old. The Armenian Asolik describes these officials simply as loyal to the Emperor. He does not specify whether they were Armenian, Georgian, or Byzantine citizens. Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd makes the statement that they were in fact Byzantines. Asolik reports that

Basil II deported the rest of the nobles of Upper Tao and settled them within the Byzantine empire.³⁰ He appears to contradict Yahyā by opposing those among the nobles of Upper Tao who were loyal to Basil II to the rest--obviously those nobles who were not thought loyal to Basil II--whom the Emperor removed.³¹ Probably, the administrative regime which was established in Upper Tao and its former dependencies was, as Asolik says, composed of the pro-Byzantine element in the nobility but was almost certainly stiffened, as Yahyā says, with reliable and capable Byzantine officials, who oversaw the introduction of Byzantine practices and dealt with other administrative problems arising from the incorporation of the new territories into the Byzantine empire.

The testimony of Asolik, supported by that of Aristakes Lastiverts'i, indicates the existence of a sizeable pro-Byzantine party among the feudatories of Upper Tao at the time of David's death. The strength of this party explains how Upper Tao slipped into Byzantium's possession, seemingly without any sign of resistance. It is true that a skirmish did take place at Havchich between the lesser nobility of Upper Tao and the Byzantine Varangian contingent, but Aristakes specifically identifies the sympathies of the fallen nobles as pro-Byzantine and the cause of the skirmish as a mundane dispute over the ownership of some forage.³² The existence of such a party, which aroused

the suspicion of Aristakes and Matthew of Edessa, may have fostered rumors and slanderous stories like the ones alleging that David of Upper Tao was murdered as the result of a conspiracy.

The lands which were annexed to the Empire in 1000 included Upper Tao, the province of Basean, Theodosiopolis (Karin), Bagrevand, and all or part of Apahunik^C with its capital at Manzikert. Although imperial permission had been given to the Curopolates David in 978 for the annexation of the Muslim-ruled cities on the northern shore of Lake Van, he had never succeeded in annexing them. They were destined to remain in Muslim hands for some time longer.

As a consequence of the addition of these new lands, the Empire now had a common border with the Kingdoms of Vaspurakan, Vanand (Kars), Iberia, and Abkhazia. Since the exact location of the northern boundary of the dukedom of Upper Tao at this time cannot be exactly placed³³, it is unclear whether David did or did not actually possess the cantons of Javaxet^Ci, Kola, Artani, and Shavshet^Ci.³⁴ In any case, there is no evidence that any of those cantons passed under direct Byzantine rule.

The establishment of the theme of Iberia is thought to have taken place immediately after the annexation of David's state and to have included all the annexed lands.³⁵ Theodosiopolis, however, may have remained as a separate

theme³⁶ unless, of course, Theodosiopolis and Iberia were names used, alternatively, to refer to the same administrative circumscription.

Byzantium and the Arab States, 990-1000

In 382/March 9, 992-February 25, 993 a Byzantine force attacked the towns on the shore of Lake Van--Khlat^C, Archēsh, and Berkri as well as Manzikert in Apahunik^C--belonging to the Marwānid dynasty. This attack may have been part of the pattern of reprisals undertaken by Basil II against those who had supported the rebels. Bād b. Dūstuk, it will be remembered, had given Skleros aid before his imprisonment by Phocas. Also prior to the rebellion Bād had paid an annual sum to Byzantium. Surely during the ensuing turbulent year the payments had no longer been made. Basil II was probably eager that they be resumed. By this time al-Hasan b. Marwān had succeeded his uncle Bād, who had been killed in attempting to expand his state at the expense of the disunited successors of the Buyīd ^CAdud al-Dawla.

In Ramadān, 376/January, 986, Sharaf al-Dawla had ousted his younger brother Ṣamsām al-Dawla from the Būyid senior amirate in Baghdad. Perhaps it was this fraternal struggle or the death of the chamberlain Sa^Cd b. Muhammad, who had been the Būyid governor at Mosul, in 377/987-988, which reawakened Bād's appetite for the city. Thus, at the time of the Byzantine civil war, 386/987-989, Bād's

attention was turned away from Byzantium. Abū Naṣr Khwāshādhah, who replaced Sa^cd b. Muḥammad as Būyid wālī in Mosul called on the Banū ^cUqayl inhabiting the Diyār Rabi^ca to help him in repelling Bād. Against this coalition the Kurdish amir had no success until after the death of Sharaf al-Dawla, 2 Jumādā II, 379/September 7, 989. Then Khwāshādhah returned to Mosul and Bād seized the part of the Tūr ^cAbdīn which had previously been denied to him. However, the Banū ^cUqayl, with the help of their western neighbors, the Numayr, continued to block Bād's path to Mosul.

Mosul escaped from the Būyids' grasp when Sharaf al-Dawla's successor Bahā' al-Dawla (379-403/989-1012) carelessly gave permission to two Ḥamdānīd princes Abū Ṭāhir Ibrāhīm and Abū ^cAbdallāh Ḥusayn, sons of Nāṣir al-Dawla b. Ḥamdān (amir of Mosul, 317-358/929-969) to return there from Baghdad. Bahā' al-Dawla obviously underestimated the strength of residual pro-Ḥamdānīd sentiment in Mosul. The population rose against the Būyids, who realized their error only when it was too late. The Būyid wālī was expelled from Mosul and the city was briefly restored to Ḥamdānīd rule.

The Ḥamdānīds at first were fortunate against Bād, who had set out to capture Mosul. The chief of the Banū ^cUqayl, Abū al-Dhawwād Muḥammad b. al-Musayyib, agreed to ally with the Ḥamdānīds in return for the cities of Jazīrat ibn ^cUmar, Niṣībīn, and Balad as well as some other places.

In the ensuing battle with the Ḥamdānids and the ʿUqayl, 14 Muḥarram, 380/April 13, 990, Bād fell while changing horses and was killed. His nephew Abū ʿAlī al-Ḥasan b. Marwān (380-386/990-996), who had commanded the cavalry unit Bād had loaned to Skleros in 987, married Bād's widow and took possession of his scattered possessions rapidly enough to meet the Ḥamdānid attack on the core of Bād's state in the Diyār Bakr. Thus, al-Ḥasan saved what became the Marwānid state. Named after his ancestor Marwān, it was destined to endure for a century.

In their final decisive defeat at the hands of al-Ḥasan b. Marwān, one of the Ḥamdānid princes was captured by the Kurds while the ʿUqaylid ally Abū al-Dhawwād took Abū Tāhir Ibrāhīm prisoner. Abū al-Dhawwād treacherously murdered Abū Tāhir, his son ʿAlī, as well as al-Righfir, the amir of the Banū Numayr. The Banū ʿUqayl then made themselves masters of Mosul, admitting only a Būyid representative to administer the finances and the iqta^Cs. Before the end of 381 (March 8, 992) the Būyids managed to retake the city of Mosul from the ʿUqaylids, and concluded a peace which allowed the ʿUqayl to retain half of their property in the vicinity of Mosul.³⁷

This was the background to the Byzantine attack on the Marwānid cities of Khlat^C, Archēsh, Berkri, and Manzikert. The author of the basic account, which exists in several different versions, was Hilāl al-Ṣābī. According

to Hilāl, the Byzantines attacked and besieged the four cities, but withdrew when al-Hasan b. Marwān agreed to a peace treaty of ten years' duration. Ibn al-Azraq says that the peace was concluded after the Marwānid amir had defeated the Byzantines. Abū Shujā^C al-Rūdhrawarī and Ibn al-Athīr suggest, however, that the Byzantine attacks caused considerable suffering and alarmed Muslims residing as far away as Baghdad. According to the version of Bar Hebraeus, al-Hasan b. Marwān agreed to pay a tribute as part of the settlement.³⁸ Since the Qaysid dynasty and Bād b. Dūstuk had formerly paid tribute to Constantinople, al-Hasan b. Marwān's consent to this demand would have been necessary before a pact could have been concluded.

During the 990's Byzantine-Fāṭimid relations reached a high point of friction, centering on the amirate of Aleppo. Both the Fāṭimid caliph, al-^CAzīz, who had granted Basil II a seven-year armistice in 377/986-987, and Abū al-Ma^Cālī, the amir of Aleppo, had refrained from taking part in the rebellion of Phocas.

Bakjūr, the former ruler of Aleppo (c. 361-367/c. 971-977), and later Fāṭimid wālī at Damascus, 373-378/983-988, was the catalyst which shattered the peace and brought the issue of Aleppo to the surface. Falling into disfavor with the Fāṭimid vizir, Ya^Cqūb b. Killis, he was forced to flee from Damascus, 17 Rajab, 378/October 31, 988, to Raqqa on the Euphrates.³⁹ Munīr al-Saqlabī succeeded him as Fāṭimid wālī at Damascus.

Bakjūr seized the government of Raqqa from the Būyids in the name of the Fāṭimids and brought the neighboring city of Raḥba under his control. Apparently, al-^CAzīz was willing to tolerate Bakjūr's equivocal loyalty in a peripheral area of Syria to which Fāṭimid authority had not previously extended. In search of an ally Bakjūr sounded out the Būyid Bahā'al-Dawla, the Kurd Bād, and even the Amir of Aleppo, Abū al-Ma^Cālī, whom he had earlier betrayed. All of his initiative proved fruitless. Finally, in Muharram, 381/December, 990 Bakjūr's desire to regain Aleppo led him to march against Abū al-Ma^Cālī. This last piece of mischief proved fatal. Southeast of Aleppo at al-Na^Cūra the Ḥamdānid amir routed Bakjūr's army and took him prisoner on 30 Muharram, 381/April 18, 991. Deciding to put an end permanently to the problem of Bakjūr, Abū al-Ma^Cālī ordered him decapitated and the body crucified upside down. He then annexed Raqqa and Raḥba to the amirate of Aleppo.⁴⁰

The sources following Hilāl al-Ṣābī give a slightly different, apparently embroidered, version of these events. They maintain that Nazzāl, the Fāṭimid wālī of Tripoli, feigned cooperation with Bakjūr in overthrowing Abū al-Ma^Cālī and then by prearrangement deserted him in the heat of battle. They also take notice of a unit of 6,000 Greek, Armenian, and Georgian troops which Michael Burtzes, the Byzantine governor at Antioch, put at the disposal of Abū

al-Ma^Cālī. Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd confirms the presence of Byzantine troops. In the version of Hilāl al-Ṣābī, Bakjūr's vizir, ^CAlī b. Ḥusayn b. al-Maghribī, who also had formerly served Abū al-Ma^Cālī, was responsible for advising Bakjūr to solicit Fāṭimid assistance. After Bakjūr's demise, Ibn al-Maghribī fled to Kūfa in Iraq and then to Egypt where he arrived in Jumādā I, 381/July 16-August 14, 991. In Egypt he preached the advantages of seizing Aleppo to al-^CAzīz.

According to the Hilāl al-Ṣābī version, the Fāṭimid caliph wrote to Abū al-Ma^Cālī, ordering him to release Bakjūr's children and grant them safety (amān). Hilāl al-Ṣābī says that Abū al-Ma^Cālī curtly rejected al-^CAzīz's command and forced the Fāṭimid legate to eat the letter he had brought with him. He then told the legate to inform his master that it would be unnecessary to send an army against Aleppo. For Abū al-Ma^Cālī himself was marching on Egypt and al-^CAzīz could expect further news of him from Ramla in Palestine. Having declared war, Hilāl al-Ṣābī says, Abū al-Ma^Cālī dispatched his vanguard south to Hims.⁴¹

Hilāl-al-Ṣābī's colorful picture of Fāṭimid-Ḥamdānid relations is certainly well-informed, but it is peculiar that an official writing in Baghdad should be the only observer aware of the scheme the Fāṭimids employed to crush Bakjūr or of the advice ^CAlī b. al-Ḥusayn b. al-Maghribī gave al-^CAzīz when he arrived in Cairo. That the ruler of a petty amirate, Abū al-Ma^Cālī, should grossly insult the

ruler of a powerful state and then vow to invade Egypt suggests that, at the least, his senses had left him. Therefore, the account of Hilāl al-Ṣābī must be regarded with suspicion. He is simply too well-informed. It is important that we recognize Hilāl al-Ṣābī's picturesque view from Bahghdad of events in Syria and Egypt and his predisposition to interpret them as the result of conspiracies. His statements, unless confirmed by independent sources, must be rejected here and henceforth.

After Munīr al-Saqlabī had chased Bakjūr from Damascus in 378/988, he remained as Fāṭimid governor of the city until 381/991. In that year word reached al-ʿAzīz that Munīr was communicating with Bahā' al-Dawla, the senior Būyid amir.⁴² According to Yaḥyā b. Saʿīd, Munīr rebelled after the death of his patron, Yaʿqūb b. Killis, al-ʿAzīz's esteemed vizir (d. 6 Dhū al-Hijja, 380/February 24, 991).⁴³ From Egypt an army was sent out under the command of the Turk Manjūtakīn, 3 Shaʿbān, 381/October 15, 991; it received some degree of cooperation from the Palestinian Banū al-Jarrāh.⁴⁴ Before Manjūtakīn could come into contact with the rebel, however, Nazzāl, the Fāṭimid wālī at Tripoli, who was on his way to join Manjūtakīn defeated Munīr at Marj Adhrā' in the Ghūṭa valley east of Damascus, 19 Ramaḍān, 381/November 29, 991.⁴⁵ Two days later Manjūtakīn arrived and occupied Damascus.

Before the end of the same month--during the night of the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth of Ramaḍān/December

5-6, 991--Abū al-Ma^Cālī died at Aleppo. His death presented the Fāṭimids with a golden opportunity.

In his reputed death-bed speech al-^CAzīz's longtime vizir Ya^Cqūb b. Killis had advised his sovereign against war with the Byzantines unless they themselves initiated hostilities and recommended that he be satisfied with the nominal acknowledgement of Fāṭimid sovereignty from the Hamdānids. The provenance of the speech, which is probably apocryphal, is almost certainly Hilāl al-Sābī.⁴⁶

Yet, the message of Ya^Cqūb b. Killis's death-bed speech reflects remarkably the reality of Fāṭimid foreign policy in the 980's. The Fāṭimids were hardly able, with only a loose grasp on their southern Syrian territories and a common border with Byzantium limited to a tiny stretch in what is now northern Lebanon, to effectively carry on the Holy War (jihād) against the Byzantine Empire. In 983 they had assisted in Bakjūr's attack on Aleppo with troops, but after that fiasco they gave the Hamdānids no further regard. When in 376/986-987 the khutba was again offered at Aleppo in the name of the Fāṭimid caliph, al-^CAzīz obtained the sort of nominal sovereignty which Ya^Cqūb b. Killis was allegedly seeking.⁴⁷

In 382/992 al-^CAzīz, however, was unwilling to let the opportunity presented by Abū al-Ma^Cālī's death escape. The vulnerability of Hamdānid Aleppo at that moment offered an inviting occasion to take a long step toward the Fāṭimid

goal of establishing the capital of the Isma^Cīlī caliphate in Baghdad, the traditional center of the Muslim world. In 992, al-^CAzīz was able to contemplate such action because in the preceding decade under Ya^Cqūb b. Killis' direction some limited consolidation of Fāṭimid territories in Syria had taken place. Certainly, such personal animosity as Hilāl al-Sābī describes between Abū al-Ma^Cālī and al-^CAzīz could have acted as the spark which ignited Fāṭimid ambitions for Aleppo. In any case, conquest of Aleppo was essential to the success of the Fāṭimid grand plan. Sooner or later, the Fāṭimids were aware, Aleppo must be incorporated into the Isma^Cīlī caliphate if they were eventually to reach Baghdad.

Therefore, in the first part of 382 (March 9, 992-), al-^CAzīz ordered Manjūtakīn to march north from Damascus. In Rabī^C II, 382/June 6-July 4, 992 he defeated a Ḥamdānid force in a skirmish near Apamea.⁴⁸ In the same month it was announced at Cairo that he had captured Ḥims, Ḥamā, and Shayzar and had laid siege to Aleppo.⁴⁹

The principal hazard the Fāṭimids faced in attacking Aleppo was the menace of Byzantine intervention. In the Ḥamdānid-Byzantine treaty of 969 the Byzantines had pledged to come to the aid of the Aleppans in case of an outside military attack. Perhaps, the existence of the Byzantine-Fāṭimid treaty, signed in 377/987-988, gave rise to Fāṭimid hopes that the Byzantines might be split from the Ḥamdānids.

At first Manjūtakīn sent a messenger to Burtzes, the governor at Antioch, informing him that he would not intrude on Byzantine territory nor permit any of his subordinates to do so. Burtzes, however, threw the Fāṭimid legate into prison. Then Manjūtakīn, whose army had already besieged Aleppo for thirty-three days in the months of Jumādā I and II, 382/July 5-September 1, 992, invaded some Byzantine territories adjacent to the amirate of Aleppo. The first casualty of the Fāṭimid attack was Ḥiṣn ^CImm, a fortress located on Burtzes' personal property. ^CImm was on the main road between Aleppo and Antioch, twenty miles from the former city and thirty-three from the latter.⁵⁰ The Fāṭimid commander then led his army in the direction of Antioch. It reached the Iron Bridge (jīsr al-ḥadīd) where the Aleppo-Antioch road crossed the river Orontes. Burtzes tried to make a stand on the west bank of the river but, as usual, was unsuccessful and fell back to Antioch. Before that massively-fortified city Manjūtakīn could do no more than show the flag. Burtzes did not dare to sally forth against what Yaḥyā b. Sa^Cīd calls the superior numbers of the Fāṭimids. Manjūtakīn remained at Antioch only half a day. He plundered as far north as Mar^Cash before returning to Aleppo.⁵¹

The most reliable sources for this campaign are Yaḥyā b. Sa^Cīd and al-Maqrīzī. The latter's information is presented in the form of communiques that arrived by pigeon

from Manjūtakīn in north Syria. The introductory statement that "in such and such a day or month the news arrived by the wing of the pigeon that. . ." is a clue that the information concerned had been included by al-Musabbihī in his great historical journal under the date cited for its arrival in Cairo.

In Jumādā I, 382/July 5-August 3, 992, it is recorded in the Itti^Cāz of al-Maqrīzī, Manjūtakīn left a force at Aleppo and with thirty-five thousand men attacked seventy thousand Byzantines at the Iron Bridge and forced the Byzantines to flee. Such was the Caliph's pleasure when the news arrived in Cairo that al-^CAzīz himself read the communique to the people. Subsequently, it was announced that Manjūtakīn had taken 10,000 Byzantine captives. It appears that the communique from Manjūtakīn considerably exaggerated the scale of his victory. The Byzantine governor could have had only a small fraction of 70,000 men under his command. According to Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd, the numerical superiority which Manjūtakīn enjoyed later convinced Burtzes against opposing him outside the walls of Antioch. This victory was probably much more limited.

The note in the Itti^Cāz, obviously from al-Musabbihī, is convincing evidence that the Fāṭimid victory in 992 at the Iron Bridge, which Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd does not mention, actually occurred. Hilāl al-Ṣābī also records this victory in 992, which he says took place at the Iron Bridge

near ^CAzāz. Seventy-five kilometres separate the Iron Bridge from ^CAzāz, and the description Hilāl gives is that of a battle fought two years later across the Orontes further south near Apamea.⁵²

Manjūtakīn returned to Aleppo where he continued the siege for another thirty-six days.⁵³ He lifted it between 1-14 Rajab, 382/September 2-15, 992 to pass the winter in Damascus. The story which Hilāl al-Ṣābī tells--that Lu'lu' al-Jarrāhī, the major domo in Hamdānid Aleppo, bribed Manjūtakīn to call off the siege--is surely baseless. The difficulties of supplying a large army at the end of distant lines of communications in winter are sufficient to explain the termination of the siege. Al-Maqrīzī states that Manjūtakīn refused a proffered bribe of one million dīnārs.⁵⁴

Also in 382/991-992 the Muslim inhabitants of Latakia rebelled against Byzantine rule. Burtzes quickly succeeded in quelling their revolt, and the captured rebels were transported into the interior of the Byzantine state.⁵⁵

The events of 383/993 remain the least well known of any year during the Fāṭimid offensive in north Syria in the 990's. There is no incontrovertible evidence of major military activity against Aleppo in that year. Ibn Zāfir alone says that Manjūtakīn resumed the siege of Aleppo in 383/993, withdrawing before the end of the year.⁵⁶ Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd states that Manjūtakīn took Apamea after a siege,

10 Rajab, 383/August 31, 993, and captured neighboring Shayzar 16 Rajab, 383/August 31, 993. Al-Maqrīzī, however, says that the Fāṭimids had taken Shayzar the previous year. There is no reason to conclude that the Hamdānids had recovered it during the winter.⁵⁷

At about the same time during the previous year--September--Manjūtakīn had gone into winter quarters, but in 383/993 Yahyā has him investing Aleppo in the fall of the year. It appears that Yahyā has ignored the break in operations for the winter of 993-994 as he never takes notice of the actual beginning of the campaigning season of 384/993-994. Thus, it is unlikely that the Fāṭimids resumed the siege of Aleppo in 383/993. However, the Armenian chronicler Matthew of Edessa says that the Fāṭimids campaigned as far east as Edessa in Arm. E. 442, which was almost exactly equivalent to A.H. 383.⁵⁸

The most reliable statement appears to be that of al-Maqrīzī, according to whom Manjūtakīn departed from Damascus in Rabī^c I, 394/April 15-May 14, 994.⁵⁹ When Manjūtakīn reached Apamea he turned toward Antioch where Byzantine armies were massing. He ravaged the villages surrounding Antioch and then withdrew south along the coast to Jabala--supposedly, according to al-Maqrīzī and Ibn al-Dawādārī, on account of the heat and flies at Antioch.

About the beginning of Jumādā II, 384/July 13-August 10, 994, the Fāṭimid army invested Aleppo.⁶⁰ Burtzes'

presence in force near Apamea forced Manjūtakīn again to relax the siege, this time in order to protect his lines of communication with southern Syria and Egypt. The major battle of the campaign took place 6 Sha^Cbān, 384/September 15, 994 near the Rūj valley north of Apamea. The Byzantine and Fāṭimid armies were drawn up along the western and eastern banks of the Orontes respectively. The Byzantines, although outnumbered, decided to fight, either at the urging of Leo Melissenos, as Ibn al-Dawādārī and Ibn Zāfir state, or at the behest of their Aleppan allies.⁶¹ This proved an unwise decision. The Byzantines were routed, leaving 5,000 of their comrades dead on the site of the battle.

The siege of Aleppo then continued through the rest of 384/994 and into the following year. Rather than go into winter quarters, the Fāṭimid army constructed a permanent camp with fortifications, baths, markets, and hosteleries.

In Cairo the news of a great victory in north Syria was excitedly anticipated. Al-Maqrīzī mentions the celebration of two "great days" there in the course of 384/994-994: the first when Fāṭimid "sea-ghāzīs" returned with a hundred Byzantines captives. The city was decorated in rejoicing in Jumādā I/June 13-July 12, 994. The second "great day" was 12 Dhū al-Qada/December 18, 994 when al-^CAzīz inspected one hundred army units and 250 Byzantine prisoners, including eight patricians.⁶²

Manjūtakīn was on the point of capturing Aleppo after besieging the city from Sha^Cbān, 384/September-October, 994 to Rabī^C I, 385/April 5-May 4, 995.⁶³ The population had consumed all the available stores of food. But then, finally, pleas for help reached the ears of the Emperor Basil II in Bulgaria, where he had been making war.

Aleppan envoys reportedly managed to impress on Basil II that once Aleppo was taken, Antioch would be the Fāṭimids' next objective.⁶⁴ This may have accurately summed up the fears of the Byzantines, but it was probably an incorrect appreciation of al-^CAzīz's actual strategy, which was focused rather on Baghdad. The value of an independent Aleppo for Byzantium was that it guarded and preserved the Empire's Syrian border at no financial cost to the Empire.

Convinced of the peril facing Aleppo and consequently Antioch, Basil II set out to rescue the starving city. According to the tradition of the Ḥamdānīd writer al-Shimshāṭī, the Emperor made the two month journey from Constantinople to ^CAzāz in seventeen days, leaving behind him 23,000 of the 40,000 men who originally accompanied him on muleback.

Manjūtakīn captured a messenger from Basil II to the amir of Aleppo, Abū al-Faḍā'il. From him Manjūtakīn learned of the Emperor's impending arrival. The same night he gave orders to burn the fortifications and permanent

installations around Aleppo. As soon as morning came, either 30 Rabī^C I, 995/May 4, 995 or the following day, 1 Rabī^C II/May 5, 995, the Fāṭimid army began a precipitate retreat toward the south.⁶⁵

The Emperor's advent and the last-minute rescue of Aleppo must have reinforced the advantages of the Byzantine protectorate in the minds of Abū al-Faḍā'il and Lu'lu'. Aware that the Hamdānids' subjects could not afford taxes after five years of intermittent warfare, Basil II returned the payment which had been levied for the past year.

Instead of returning directly to Constantinople, the Emperor decided on a campaign in central Syria to recover Abū al-Faḍā'il's lost territories and to strengthen the Hamdānid-Byzantine defensive position.

The sources following Hilāl al-Ṣābī say that Basil II remained only two days at Aleppo and departed south on the third. Probably a longer period was necessary to regroup the army which he had left spread out across Anatolia.⁶⁶

The first cities which the Byzantine army approached, Apamea and Shayzar, each fell within a single day.⁶⁷

Basil II recaptured Rafaniyya and went on to Hims. Although the Byzantines burned and pillaged it and took many captives, this episode is excluded in the tradition of al-Shimshāṭī from the three other times in the second half of the tenth century when the Byzantines sacked the city.⁶⁸

As many as 10,000 prisoners may have been taken.⁶⁹

Tripoli was Basil II's next objective and perhaps the principal one of the campaign. Possession of Tripoli and its port would go a long way toward guaranteeing the security of the Hamdānid state and Byzantine hegemony in north Syria. In addition, Tripoli had served as a forward port for Fātimid operation in north Syria and, in particular, against Aleppo.⁷⁰ The siege which Basil II initiated, according to the tradition related by Hilāl al-Sābī, lasted between forty and fifty days.⁷¹

The Emperor promised the Tripolitanians favorable treatment if they would abide by an agreement (^Cahd), apparently in the hope that a pact similar to that with the Hamdānids could be arranged to bring Tripoli into the Byzantine orbit.⁷²

This would have the advantage of offering the governor of the city, al-Muzahhar b. Nazzāl, the son of the longtime Fātimid wālī, the opportunity to become an independent amir.⁷³ Ibn Nazzāl indicated in the presence of the Emperor that he was willing to surrender Tripoli to the Byzantines. However, the inhabitants of the city opposed Ibn Nazzāl's plan. A certain qādī, ^CAlī b. ^CAbd al-Wahīd b. Haydara, galvanized resistance within Tripoli. When Ibn Nazzāl and the town notables returned from a meeting outside the city walls, they found the gates of the city locked in their faces. Basil II was unwilling to continue the siege until the population was starved out.

Accompanied by Ibn Nazzāl, he began the northward march along the coast to Antioch. A brother of al-Muzahhar b. Nazzāl succeeded him as wālī of Tribpol.⁷⁴

The final operation of the campaign, as far as is known, took place at Antartūs, fifty-nine kilometres north of Tripoli, where the Byzantines rebuilt the ruined coastal fortress, which then became the most southerly Byzantine outpost on the Mediterranean coast. Perhaps, Antartūs had been abandoned by the Byzantines during the period of Fātimid-Byzantine warfare from 975 to 987. The fortress could not have been out of use very long since restoration took only three days. Al-Maqrīzī says Basil II garrisoned it with a force of 4000. These were either Armenians or, according to Ibn Zāfir, Muslims from the Jabal ibn Mas^cūd.⁷⁵

From Antartūs the Emperor returned to Antioch and then to Constantinople. At Antioch he appointed a new governor, Damian Dalassenos, to replace Michael Burtzes, who was placed under house arrest.⁷⁶ A number of causes might have contributed to Basil's displeasure: Burtzes' numerous military defeats, his tardiness in bringing the gravity of the Aleppan situation to the Emperor's attention, or, possibly, some attempt to arrogate unjustified powers to himself in so remote a corner of the Empire.

The news of Manjūtakīn's precipitate and unexpected retreat caused shock and alarm in Cairo. Within ten days massive war preparations began. These continued for sev-

eral months. Al-^CAzīz moved his pavilion to Munyat al-Asbagh east of Cairo, where military staging took place, 10 Rabī^C II, 385/May 14, 995.⁷⁷ When a decree announcing mobilization was read in Cairo, civilians by the thousands volunteered to march against the Byzantines. Jaysh b. al-Ṣamsāma set out for Syria with one large army while other armies assembled at Munyat al-Asbagh. 50,000 dīnārs was sent to the head of the Banū al-Jarrāh in Palestine to obtain his cooperation.⁷⁸

Messengers from Basil II and Abū al-Fadā'il soon arrived at al-^CAzīz's court. The Byzantine ambassador announced that Basil II had withdrawn from Arab territory. He offered apologies for the invasion and asked for a renewal of the Byzantine-Fāṭimid treaty. The Ḥamdānid ambassador asked that Abū al-Fadā'il's role in the recent Fāṭimid setbacks be overlooked. Al-^CAzīz, joining in the charade, consented to both requests.⁷⁹

It is difficult to know what to make of these embassies. The chroniclers are agreed in saying that al-^CAzīz planned to continue the war. All the time preparations for a Syrian campaign progressed. Perhaps, al-^CAzīz agreed only to an armistice for the duration of the winter.

In Ramaḍān, 385/September 29-October 28, 995 al-^CAzīz moved his camp to Munā Ja^Cfar and 20 Rabī^C I, 386/April 12, 996 to Bilbais, the first stop on the route to Palestine.

War preparations suffered a considerable setback, however, when the Fāṭimid war fleet which was under construction burned in the harbor, 23 Rabī^C II, 386/May 15, 996, even as it was on the point of being launched.⁸⁰

The Byzantines residing in Cairo--prisoners of war according to al-Maqrīzī and Italian merchants from Byzantine Amalfi according to Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd--were accused of setting the fire. The mob killed scores before ^CIsā b. Naṣṭūras, al-^CAzīz's Christian vizir who was supervising the construction of the fleet, could restore tranquility. The foundations for a new fleet were laid with wood gathered from every conceivable place--even the roof beams of the mint and a hospital.⁸¹

Al-^CAzīz's plan to drive back the Byzantines was destined to remain only a plan. 25 Rajab, 386/August 13, 996, the Caliph contracted an illness which eventually led to his death 28 Ramaḍān/October 14 of the same year.⁸² He was succeeded by his son al-Ḥākīm. Suddenly, instead of a resolute sovereign experienced in warfare and with a firm grasp on the leadership of the state, an eleven year-old boy, who was at the mercy of the different elements of the Fāṭimid elite, succeeded to the Caliphate. The struggle for internal hegemony came to overshadow the anti-Byzantine offensive in Cairo's attention. The only full-scale Fāṭimid attack on the Byzantine Empire ever planned was permanently postponed.

The first victim of the resulting political conflict in the Fāṭimid state was the Christian vizir ʿĪsā b. Naṣṭūras, whose ouster the Kutāma Berbers and, especially, their chief Ibn ʿAmmār, demanded. As the Kutāma were a critical element in the army ʿĪsā b. Naṣṭūras was dismissed and later executed. Mass rage at the inability of the Fāṭimid army to stand up to the real Christian enemies, the Byzantines, may have necessitated his death.

The Fāṭimid army in Syria did not become totally inactive. In Shawwāl, 386/October 17-November 14, 996, Manjūtakīn besieged the Byzantine garrison of the recently-restored fortress at Anṭartūs.⁸³ When a Byzantine force under Damian Dalassenos approached, the Fāṭimid army fled. Bad weather heightened their misfortune. A tempest almost completely destroyed the Fāṭimid fleet. What remained fell into Byzantine hands.⁸⁴

In his first year as governor at Antioch Dalassenos had led a raid on Tripoli, ravaged the suburbs, and took numerous captives. Three months later he raided ʿArqa, twenty-two kilometres northwest of Tripoli.⁸⁵ As Dalassenos had been appointed governor of Antioch in the second half of September, 995,⁸⁶ these events must have taken place between September 15, 995 and September 30, 966. In the following year, Dalassenos again raided Tripoli. Perhaps, it was during this operation that he rescued the Byzantine garrison at Anṭartūs as well as capturing the citadel at al-Lakma on the Mediterranean coast near ʿArqa.⁸⁷

Another raid, which Dalassenos organized on Rafaniya to the east of the coastal mountains but still west of the Orontes, was probably connected with the revolt of Manjūtakīn, the Fāṭimid governor at Damascus, in spring, 997.

The appointment of Ibn ʿAmmār as first minister (wasīṭa) and the hegemony of the Berbers (the Maghribīs or "westerners"), especially the Kutāma, had resulted in the exclusion of all those of eastern ethnic background (Mashāriqa) from the Fāṭimid state administration. Manjūtakīn, a Turk, alarmed by the prospect of Berber domination of the Fāṭimid Caliphate, began marching with his army toward Cairo. At Rafah near ʿAsqalān he clashed with Sulaymān b. Jaʿfar b. Falāḥ, a Maghribī, who had been appointed to succeed him at Damascus, on Friday, 4 Jumādā I, 387/May 15, 997.⁸⁸ Manjūtakīn fled back to Damascus in defeat. There he found the population hostile to him and continued his flight. He eventually fell into the hands of Mufarrij b. Daghfal b. al-Jarrāḥ, who turned him over to ʿAlī b. Jaʿfar b. Falāḥ, Sulaymān b. Jaʿfar's brother and deputy.

The Fāṭimids' troubles were well known to the Byzantines. Manjūtakīn had unsuccessfully sought military support for his invasion of Egypt from Basil II. "[Basil] did not think it right," Yahyā b. Saʿīd says, "to aid him against his master nor to support him in revolt against him."⁸⁹

As Ibn ʿAmmār had tried to monopolize the Fāṭimid political order in favor of the Berbers, inevitably the Turkish and other eastern groups in the army, who were the principal losers from Ibn ʿAmmār's ascendancy, attempted to fight back. After three days of rioting and civil war in Cairo, the easterners (al-Mashāriqa) forced Ibn ʿAmmār out as wasīta. The principal beneficiary of the revolt was the eunuch Barjawān, whose position as al-Ḥākim's personal guardian and tutor helped him to gain the controlling position in the revamped state hierarchy.⁹⁰ For the next two years and eight months Barjawān was the virtual ruler of Egypt.

Jaysh b. al-Ṣamsāma replaced Sulaymān b. Jaʿfar b. Falāḥ as governor at Damascus as a result of this Cairo coup.⁹¹ Immediately, grave problems confronted Ibn al-Ṣamsāma. The population of Damascus had rebelled after the departure of Ibn Falāḥ, and a local figure, al-Dahtaḡīn, had taken control of the city.

Another local rebellion broke out in 387/997 at Tyre. The rebel leader ʿAlāqa, who engraved the inscription "Glory after poverty for the amir ʿAlāqa" on his money, bade the Byzantine Emperor to send help. Although Basil II had refused the request of the far more powerful Manjūtakīn in the same year, 387/997, he acceded to ʿAlāqa's request and sent him naval support.⁹²

So long as the Byzantine navy could prevent Tyre from being subjected to both land and sea blockades, the

Fāṭimids could not starve the city out. However, the long range prognosis for Tyrean independence was dim. What possible Byzantine purpose did support for ḲAlāqa and his followers serve? A more satisfactory answer to this puzzling question will be possible later from a perspective embracing the whole decade.

In any event, Fāṭimid rule could not be thrown off so easily. Jaysh b. al-Ṣamsāma turned away from the route to Damascus to lay siege to Tyre while ships from the Fāṭimid fleet attacked and drove away the Byzantines. The Fāṭimids put to death the entire crew--perhaps 150 sailors, according to the estimates of Ibn al-Qalānisī and Yahyā b. SaḲīd--of a Byzantine ship they had captured. The besiegers overran the city itself, 14 Jumādā II, 388/June 13, 998. ḲAlāqa was then sent to Cairo where he was publicly executed.⁹³

Ibn al-Ṣamsāma was at Damascus when word reached him that a Byzantine contingent had invested the citadel of Apamea. During the Syrian campaign in 995 the Byzantines had captured it.⁹⁴ However, a fire within the fortress had given Abū al-Fadā'il and the eunuch Lu'lu', the Aleppan major domo, the opportunity to reclaim Apamea. As it had been specifically granted to the Ḥamdānids in the treaty of 359/969, they had a strong legal argument for ownership.

The Ḥamdānid army fled at the approach of Damian Dalassenos, who laid siege to the citadel. The local headmen sent to the Fāṭimid Jaysh b. al-Ṣamsāma for aid, which

soon arrived. 21 Rajab, 388/July 19, 998, Ibn al-Ṣamsāma clashed with the Byzantines, who succeeded in reaching the Fātimid baggage and sent the Muslims fleeing to the south. However, in the course of the route, Damian Dalassenos received a side wound which proved fatal. With his death the tide of battle turned against the Byzantines.⁹⁵

Reputedly, five-to-six thousand Byzantines were taken prisoner. Among them were Dalassenos' two sons and many of the army officers, who, according to Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd, would spend the next ten years in Cairo before being ransomed.⁹⁶

The defeat apparently rendered the Byzantines forces stationed in the vicinity of Antioch incapable of further resistance. Jaysh b. al-Ṣamsāma went on to besiege Antioch for four days and raided as far north as Mar^Cash. Finally, he withdrew to Shayzar, which must have returned to Fātimid rule at this time.⁹⁷

There is no record of what action the Byzantines took on a local basis to recover from this setback. Fourteen months later, however, the Byzantines unleashed a counterstroke, which demonstrated that events in Syria were receiving close attention in Constantinople. The Emperor himself appeared with an army at the Iron Bridge, 6 Shawwāl, 389/September 20, 999, and embarked on an eighty-eight day long campaign in Muslim territory.⁹⁸

Coming on the heels of the severe Byzantine defeat at Apamea the previous year, it appears that Basil II's

intention in invading Syria was to recover what had been lost in the intervening year and to strengthen and consolidate the Byzantine position on the southwestern frontier. In both these endeavors he was ultimately successful.

Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd provides information that indicates Basil II had another, more important reason for the invasion of Syria. That was to obtain Fāṭimid agreement to a multi-year armistice, which would allow Basil to turn his full attention to what interested him most--the complete subjugation and pacification of Bulgaria.

Basil II had prior to invading Syria sent two ambassadors to Cairo to seek an armistice and peace treaty, according to Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd, and one of the ambassadors had returned, bringing the Fāṭimid reply.⁹⁹ Presumably, their answer was either negative or the conditions on which the Fāṭimids insisted were unacceptable to the Emperor Basil. This then led to the invasion of Muslim territory in autumn, 999.

Apamea was the first objective of the Byzantine invasion. Basil II's principal purpose there appears to have been to give a Christian burial to the bones of the Byzantines who had perished with Damian Dalassenos the preceding year.¹⁰⁰ It is unclear whether he managed to retake the citadel from the Fāṭimid garrison. In all probability, he did; for the Emperor was leading a large

army, which should have encountered little difficulty in capturing a minor fortress such as Apamea.

Basil II was not, however, immediately successful in taking neighboring Shayzar, farther up the Orontes valley. He laid siege to the fortress there, Dhū al-Qa^cda, 389/October 28, 999. The Fāṭimid commander Mansūr b. Karādīs steadfastly resisted until Basil II agreed to allow him to depart with his followers and without making a display of submission. Rather than taking shelter in Fāṭimid territory, Ibn Karādīs sought refuge at Hamdānid Aleppo.¹⁰¹

Basil II installed a garrison of Armenians at Shayzar and seized several neighboring fortresses, including Ḥiṣn Abī Qubays to the west of Shayzar and Ḥiṣn Maṣyāth to the southwest and other strongholds in the Jabal al-Rawādīf and the Jabel Bahrā.¹⁰²

After burning Rafaniyya, the Byzantine army carved a bloody path to Ḥims, which they sacked again--the fourth time in half a century. Basil's Russian contingent burned the magnificent church of St. Constantine when members of the population took refuge within it. The sack of Ḥims took place in the first half of Dhū al-Ḥijja, 389/November 13-28, 999.¹⁰³ Jaysh b. al-Ṣamsāma sent out urgent calls from Damascus for help against the Byzantine invaders. In response, what Yaḥyā b. Sa^cīd says was thought to be the largest army to gather at Damascus in the history of

Islam massed there.¹⁰⁴ However, there is no evidence that Ibn al-Ṣamsāma actually attempted to use this army against the Byzantines.

Intensely cold weather set in while the Byzantine army remained at Hims. Food and forage became scarce and expensive. Most of the army horses were already dead. These conditions prompted Basil II to take his army to the coast in search of a milder climate.¹⁰⁵ En route to Tripoli, the Byzantines burned ^CArqa and destroyed the citadel. They arrived at Tripoli 23 Dhū al-Ḥijja, 389/December 6, 999. Two days later they invested the fortress, severed the city's water aqueduct, and dug a trench around the walls. Provisions and forage arrived aboard two Byzantine ships which on the return trip carried cargoes of captives taken at Jubayl and Beirut, the two major coastal points south of Tripoli.¹⁰⁶

In the first days of A.H. 390/December 13, 999 at Tripoli fighting broke out when the garrison of the citadel sallied forth against the Byzantine besiegers. In this battle, according to Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd, who alone reports it, Basil II suffered many casualties killed and wounded. Al-Maqrīzī, who ignores the battle, says only that the Byzantine army was in dire straits.¹⁰⁷ Therefore, four days later on 5 Muharram, 390/December 17, 999, Basil II ordered his army to begin the march to Antioch via Latakia.

Basil II named his trusted subordinate Nicephoros Uranos as governor at Antioch.¹⁰⁸ The appointment of an

official who was both a successful general (Uranos had inflicted a crushing defeat on the Bulgarian ruler Samuel in 997) and an intimate friend of the Emperor is indicative of the significance Antioch took on in Basil's strategic and political outlook circa A.D. 1000.

The Emperor Basil passed the winter with his army in Cilicia in the region of Tarsos (Tarsūs) and Mopsuestia (Maṣṣīsa). He remained there six months, presumably planning to reinvade Muslim territory when spring came.

At this time the eunuch Barjawān remained the most powerful figure in the Fāṭimid administration. After Basil II had departed from Muslim territory, Barjawān communicated his consent to the Byzantine legate, who had been detained in Cairo during the invasion of Syria, to the conditions the Byzantine Emperor had sought from the Fāṭimids. He delegated Orestes, the Melkite patriarch of Jerusalem (986-1004/6), to accompany the Byzantine ambassador to Constantinople. Orestes was empowered to arrange the final conditions and texts of a Byzantine-Fāṭimid armistice and peace treaty, which al-Hākīm would definitely sign, Barjawān assured the Byzantine ambassador. The diplomatic party left Cairo before 25 Rabī^c II, 390/ April 4, 1000, the date al-Hākīm had Barjawān murdered. The peace which Orestes subsequently concluded at Constantinople was to last for ten years.¹⁰⁹

The lost chronicle of Hilāl al-Ṣābī apparently also mentioned this treaty.¹¹⁰ From Hilāl's perspective it

was the Fāṭimid Barjawān who initiated contact with Basil II through the offices of his Christian deputy Fahd b. Ibrāhīm. Hilāl states that Basil II happily agreed to a treaty of ten years. He sent presents in return for the gifts already received from the Fāṭimids.

Thus, two independent sources, Yahyā b. Sa^cīd and Hilāl al-Ṣābī, confirm that a Byzantine-Fāṭimid treaty was signed in 1000 or, at the latest, in 1001. The incessant demands of the Bulgarian war on Byzantine resources was ample reason in itself for Basil II to seek a treaty with the Fāṭimids. Therefore, Yahyā b. Sa^cīd is almost certainly correct in saying that it was Constantinople that first raised the idea of a treaty. Yahyā was better placed than Hilāl al-Ṣābī to be aware of the actual facts of the exchange, of which he also speaks in greater detail. It would be more gratifying to Hilāl al-Ṣābī's anti-Fāṭimid mentality, naturally, to attribute the initiation of negotiations to the Fāṭimids since a focal theme in Fāṭimid propaganda was their superior ability to carry on the Holy war (jihād) against the Christians.

The conclusion of the Byzantine-Fāṭimid treaty was a major turning point in Byzantium's relations with its Arab neighbors. Suddenly, there was security and tranquility on the southeastern frontier instead of the major war which had been brewing. Thereafter, Basil II carefully tried to preserve the peace on this frontier in the

face of provocations on the part of al-Ḥakīm and the often conflicting ambitions of his own subordinates.

The achievement of this pact was one of the major foreign policy accomplishments of Basil II's reign. If only for the reason that peace with the Arabs reduced the influence of the great Anatolian generals, Basil II could be satisfied with the conclusion of the pact. But its significance was much greater. It ended forty years of Arab-Byzantine warfare in north Syria. The first ten-year pact was renewed over and over until in the end it endured for more than half a century: the longest period of declared peace that the Byzantine Empire had ever enjoyed with its Muslim neighbors. The signing of this pact, however, did not mean that all conflict between Byzantium and the Fāṭimid caliphate disappeared. There continued to be periods of greater and lesser tension between the two powers.

Byzantine policy toward Syria between the Emperor's campaigns of 995 and 999 was highly aggressive. Damian Dalassenos as the dux of Antioch created an active role for himself and relentlessly pressured the Fāṭimids. Byzantine aid to the rebellion of ḲAlāqa at Tyre should probably be seen as a part, albeit an ill-advised one, of this aggressive policy. The assistance given to the Tyreans does not seem to fit into any other general pattern of either expansionist or strategic activity. In any case, this aid must have been relatively limited. In

contrast, the rebellion led by Manjūtākīn, which the Emperor refused to support, was a movement of much greater scope and possible consequences. It almost certainly would have demanded more of Byzantine resources than the small amount of aid given to ḲAlāqa and might even have led to Byzantine participation in an invasion of Egypt. Possibly, the size of the commitment necessary for supporting the respective rebellions meant that Dalassenos could have made the decision in favor of aiding ḲAlāqa while the decision against helping Manjūtākīn was the Emperor's.

Conceivably, it had been the intention of Basil II since 995 to raise the intensity of conflict in Syria in order to obtain an armistice from the Fāṭimids. Whether this was in fact the case or it was the defeat and death of Damian Dalassenos in July, 998 which convinced Basil II to seek a peace treaty is not clear. What does appear certain is that obtaining such a treaty was the object of Basil's Syrian campaign in 999. For that reason he was prepared to invade Syria again in the following year if the Fāṭimids still rejected the proposed treaty.

From the vantage point of the modern historian it is clear that certain tensions were built into the Fāṭimid attitude toward the peace with Byzantium from the beginning. There were at least two obvious drawbacks rising out of Fāṭimid doctrine and propaganda in respect to

Byzantium, which for three hundred years had been the perpetual target of Muslim enmity. First, consenting to even a temporary peace with Byzantium threw doubt on the Fāṭimid claims to be the most worthy ghāzīs in the service of the Muslim faith and, therefore, most deserving of the support of Muslims everywhere. Second, although it is not known whether the Fāṭimid-Byzantine treaty explicitly recognized the Byzantine protectorate over Aleppo, it had the effect of making north Syria a Byzantine sphere of influence. Yet, unavoidably, if the Fāṭimids were to realize their pretensions to the universal caliphate and world dominion, Baghdad must eventually become the Fāṭimid capital, and Aleppo lay directly on the road to Baghdad.¹¹¹

By the year 1000 the position of the Byzantine Empire vis-à-vis the Muslim dynasties of the Jazīra and Iraq was vastly improved as a result of internal and dynastic struggles in which the Byzantines took no part.

The most significant transformation of the decade was the expulsion of the last vestiges of the fading Būyid authority from Mosul and northern Iraq. In 386/996 the ^CUqaylid amir Abū al-Dhawwād Muḥammad b. al-Musayyib died. The ^CUqayl then recognized ^CAlī b. al-Musayyib, the eldest brother, as amir. A younger but more ambitious brother, al-Muqallad b. al-Musayyib, tried to seize Mosul in order to obtain the amirate. Although al-Muqallad was successful in expelling the Būyid governor

from Mosul and even pursued him as far south as Baghdad in Dhū al-Hijja, 386/December 15, 995-January 13, 996, he failed to receive the amirate. The peace concluded the following year between al-Muqallad and the Būyid senior amir Bahā' al-Dawla conferred Mosul, al-Kūfa, al-Qaṣr (Qaṣr b. Hubayra?), and al-Jāmi^Cayn (modern Hilla) upon al-Muqallad as iqṭā'^C s.¹¹² Al-Muqallad obtained undisputed possession of Mosul only after the death of his brother ^CAlī at the beginning of 390/999-1000. When a year later an assassin murdered al-Muqallad at al-Anbār, 22 Ṣafar, 391/January 21, 1001, his son Qirwāsh took over his possessions. It appears that al-Hasan b. Muḥammad, the brother of al-Muqallad, who was the ruler of Jazīrat ibn ^CUmar, Niṣībīn, and Balad, succeeded ^CAlī as amir. Nevertheless, the most powerful branch of ^CUqayl was that headed by al-Muqallad and then Qirwāsh.¹¹³

Meanwhile, the Marwānid principality which spread across the Diyār Bakr and the north shore of Lake Van was weakened by the secession of the city of Amīda after the murder of the amir al-Hasan b. Marwān in 387/January 14, 997-January 3, 998.¹¹⁴ Amīda was one of the most important strategic points in eastern Anatolia as well as being one of the two capitals of the Diyār Bakr.

The murder plot is reported to have been organized after the Amir's repression of pro-Ḥamadānid elements at Mayyāfāriqīn. ^CAbd al-Barr, a leading shaykh of Amīda,

feared similar repression there and joined with Sa^Cid, the brother of the amir. When al-Hasan b. Marwān entered Amīda, someone threw a handful of gold coins in his face while a certain Abū Tāhir Yūsuf b. Damna struck him down with his staff. Sa^Cid, who later received the laqab Mumahhid al-Dawla, proclaimed himself amir (387-401/997-1011) at Mayyāfāriqīn. However, his authority did not extend to Amīda, which concurrently entered into a twenty-eight year period as an autonomous city ruled by ^CAbd al-Barr and Ibn Damna. The Marwānid amir was only nominally recognized in the khutba and on the coinage there. Ibn Damna quickly eliminated his new father-in-law ^CAbd al-Barr from any share of power with him. One of Ibn Damna's first tasks was to normalize relations with the Fātimid and ^CAbbāsid caliphs and the Byzantine emperor. To this purpose he sent gifts to all three rulers.¹¹⁵ In so far as Basil II, the only one of the three rulers actually in a position to take advantage of Amīda's isolation, was concerned, Ibn Damna's approach was quite successful. Basil II showed no appetite for the lands of Mumahhid al-Dawla nor for the independent city of Amīda ruled by Ibn Damna.

As a result of the events of the 990's, at the turn of the millenium a number of tribal dynasties together controlled the Muslim territories in northern Syria and Iraq, certainly a development which the Byzantines

considered welcome. None of these dynasties was strong enough to stand up to the military power of Byzantium. The only Muslim dynasty which could conceivably have mustered the resources to be deemed a countervailing force was the Būyid. The 990's, however, had brought Būyid withdrawal from Mosul and the final defeat of ʿAdud al-dawla's grand plan to unite Syriā with Iraq. Bahā' al-Dawla's transferral of his capital from Baghdad to Shīrāz in 1000 is symptomatic of the Būyids' declining interest in the fate of the Syro-Mesopotamian borderlands.¹¹⁶

Thus, the territories of Syria and Iraq contiguous to the Byzantine empire were controlled in A.D. 1000 by the Ḥamdānids of Aleppo, the Banū Numayr in the Diyār Mudar (eastern Jazīra), the Marwānids in the Diyār Bakr and as far north as Lake Van, and the Banu ʿUqayl in the Diyār Rabīʿa (eastern Jazīra) and northern Iraq, including Mosul. Amīda was an autonomous city although nominally subordinate to the Marwānids.

Conclusion

The year 1000, Basil II's twenty-fifth year on the Byzantine throne, marked the actual midpoint of his reign. In that year took place two of the most important events of that famous reign: the conclusion of peace with the Fātimid caliphate and the annexation of the lands of the Curopolates David, Duke of Upper Tao. These two

achievements inaugurated what were to be the salient aspects of Byzantine eastern policy in the second half of Basil's rule.

The conclusion of the Fāṭimids peace agreement neutralized the only Muslim power that in A.D. 1000 was capable of offensively threatening the Byzantine empire. This, together with the fragmentation of political authority in the Syro-Mesopotamian borderlands between a number of tribal dynasties and the complete eclipse of the Būyids, represented a thorough consolidation of the Byzantine position on the southeastern frontier. The independence of the Ḥamdānīd amirate of Aleppo was also preserved, although the Fāṭimid-Byzantine treaty placed Aleppo in an anomalous position. While the scale of conflict over this issue was greatly reduced, no final solution to the question of Aleppo had been reached. The Marwānīd amir Mumahhid al-Dawla also accepted client status. This did no more than recreate the political relationship which had existed earlier between his great-uncle Bād b. Dūstuk and the Byzantine emperor. Through his possession of the entire Diyār Bakr except Amīda, Mumahhid al-Dawla appears as a more powerful and well-established figure than Bād b. Dūstuk had been when he accepted Byzantine cliency.

In sum, indecision over the direction Byzantine policy should take in respect to the Muslim frontier states

dominated the war-filled decade of the 990's. By A.D. 1000 a policy of non-intervention and peaceful influence in the politics of these states had been inaugurated.

The annexation of the lands gathered together by David of Upper Tao marked the advent of Byzantium as a Caucasian power. Thereafter, the Byzantine border reached to the Kingdoms of Abkhazia, Iberia, Great Armenia (Bagratids) and Vaspurakan. Basil II sought recognition of his sovereignty by their kings and the establishment of cliency relationships with them. Only one of the major Caucasian kings, Gagik I, the Bagratid King of Kings, refused to recognize Byzantine sovereignty. In Upper Tao Basil II had worked to build an indigenous pro-Byzantine party, which smoothed the path to annexation. The strengthening of pro-Byzantine elements was subsequently an important feature of Byzantine policy elsewhere in Caucasia. Although there is no confirmatory evidence, it seems realistic to assume that the Byzantines also attempted to form similar parties within the Muslim border states.

Thus, in A.D. 1000 Basil II had consolidated both the southeastern and eastern frontiers, permitting greater concentration on Bulgarian affairs, his main interest, and set the pattern for Byzantine action in those regions during the second half of his reign.

Footnotes

¹Yahyā, PO, 219-200/427-428.

²Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 27: 133-134; Yahyā, PO, 221/429. N. Adontz, "Les Taronites en Arménie et à Byzance," B, 10 (1935), 543. Yahyā, 216/424, qualifies the sons of Bagrat as patricians while Asolik refers to Čordvanel as magister. The identification proposed by Adontz appears tenuous to me. Terjan lay directly between modern Erzurum and Erzincan, according to Hubschmann, Die Altarmenische Ortsnamen, Indogermanische Forschungen, XVI, (Strassburg, 1904), 287.

³Yahyā, PO, 221/429.

⁴Ibid., 221-222/429-430.

⁵According to the description of Psellos, Chronographie, especially chapter 34, 21-22.

⁶Basil II refused to aid Manjūtakīn against Ibn Ḥammār during the minority of al-Hākīm and refused to support the alliance of Sālīh b. Mirdās and the amirs of the Kalb and Ta'ī against the Fāṭimid central government in 415/1024-1025. Yahyā, PO, 244/452, CSCO, 244-245. In contrast, the rebellions which Basil did support against the Fāṭimids were limited to very local affairs: that of ḤAlāqa at Tyre in 387/997 and of ḤAziz al-Dawla Fātik at Aleppo toward the end of al-Hākīm's reign, PO, 246/454, CSCO, 216.

⁷Histoire de la Géorgie, ed. M. F. Brosset (St. Petersburg, 1849), I, 292.

⁸Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 43: 162; Vardan Vardapet, Vseobshchaia Istorii, trans. N. Emin (Moscow, 1861), 117.

⁹The Georgian Royal Annals (K^Cart^Clis C^Cxovreba) as well as the eleventh century history of the Georgian Bagratid dynasty composed by Sumbat, the son of David (c. 1030) also explicitly recognize that no son survived David. This is especially important to note because the title of Sumbat's History of the Bagratids suggests that it was an official or quasi-official history of the Bagratid dynasty of Georgia. [On Sumbat's History of the Bagratids see C. Toumanoff, "Medieval Georgian Historical Literature (vii-xv centuries)," Traditio, 1 (1943), 154-156 and 173. Toumanoff believes that Sumbat may himself have been a Bagratid. He used a common source with the Chronicle of Iberia, one of the component parts of the Georgian Royal Annals. This accounts for the numerous nearly identical passages in Sumbat's History of the Bagratids and the Georgian Royal Annals. For the statement that David left no son, see Histoire de la Géorgie, I, 297, and E. Takaichvili, "Istochniki gruzinskii letopisei, II: Zhizn' i izvestie o Bagratidakh, Tsarakh nashikh gruzinskikh, otkuda oni iavilis' v etu stranu ili s kakogo vremeni vladaiut oni tsarstvom Gruzinskim, kotoroe napisal Sumbat, sin Davida," Sbornik opisanie mestnostei i plemen za Kavkaza, 28 (1900), 154.] Therefore, it is to be expected that Sumbat accurately reflects the interests of the Bagratid dynasty of Georgia. To these interests the cession of Upper Tao and its dependencies to Byzantium would appear to be directly antithetical.

Moreover, Sumbat never states that David named Bagrat III as his heir nor does he claim that the Georgian Bagratids proposed their own, contradictory right to Upper Tao in opposition to the Byzantine occupation of it in 1000. The Georgian Royal Annals, in the version compiled in the reign of King Vaxtang (1675-1735), is the only source which asserts that David of Upper Tao ever considered Bagrat III his heir, but, as in the case of Sumbat, there is no hint that the Georgian Bagratids laid claim to Upper Tao after the death of David on the basis of the unjustness of the Byzantine occupation. Indeed, it is never explained in the Royal Annals why David's lands passed into the hands of the Byzantine emperor despite David's having named Bagrat III his heir.

It is obvious that if Bagrat III had actually at one time been considered by David as his heir, at some later point David must have disinherited him. (Possibly by the actual testament in favor of Basil II). Yahyā b. Sa^Cid alone suggests when this might have been and what prompted it (i.e. as a result of David's ill-fated aid to Bardas Phocas, thus circa 990). However, the evidence is not sufficient to permit a conclusion as to whether Bagrat III was disinherited on account of the bitterness that had

recently arisen between him and David or simply as an expedient means through which David might escape the wrath of the Emperor for his intervention in the Byzantine civil war. Z. Avalichvili, "La succession du curopalate David d'Ibérie, dynaste de Tao," B, 8 (1933), 192-193, admits the plausibility of Yahyā's statement that David willingly ceded his lands to the Empire. However, Avalichvili questions Yahyā's explanation of what prompted the cession. He suggests that David may have altered his will as a result of his earlier altercations with Bagrat III. While this is certainly possible, the evidence remains confined to Yahyā's statement. As for the quarrel of Bagrat III and David, the few facts which are preserved concerning it explain very little. The actual complexion of the issue between Bagrat III and David simply is not clear enough to sustain Avalichvili's thesis.

Unjustified is the statement of N. Adontz, "Tornik le Moine," B, 13 (1938), 150-152, that it was only in 991, as a result of the agreement of the same year between David and Basil II that Bagratid possession of David's territories was reduced and limited to the duration of his lifetime. This statement is part of an involved argument: Adontz claims that since David already in 978 held the lands mentioned by Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 15; 59-60 (i.e. Khaltoyarich, Chormayri, Karin, Basean, and the fortress of Sevuk) and that Hark^C and Apahunik^C were in the possession of Bād b. Dūstuk at that time, David would not have consented in 978 to limit his tenure of possession of those territories to his own lifetime. However, as is shown in Chapter 7, fn. 47, Adontz' original premise is incorrect; in fact, David held only a tiny fraction of the lands mentioned by Asolik in 978.

¹⁰Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 38: 151-152.

¹¹Honigmann, Ostgrenze, 154.

¹²Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 40: 154-155.

¹³Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 41: 156-159.

Grousset, Histoire de l'Arménie, 525-526, connects the account of Matthew of Edessa, Chronicle, chapter 22-23, 31-34, to this second of Mamlan's campaigns in Apahunik^C.

¹⁴N. Adontz, "Tornik le Moine," B, 13 (1938), 152-153: "Did David really promise to leave his lands [to Basil] after his death? How can the well-established fact that one sees [David] manifesting an intense military activity thereafter to enlarge his empire while trying to conquer not only Manazkert, but also Xlat^C [Khlat^C], that is to say, the major part of Armenia, be explained? No one is naive enough to believe that [David] gratuitously spilled the blood of his soldiers for the Empire." But the solution Adontz proposes to this dilemma--that the resistance Gurgin made to Basil II in 1001 was in order to assert his own rights to David's patrimony--flies in the face of all written evidence: in particular, Gurgin had no rights to David's patrimony. The Duke of Upper Tao had adopted Bagrat III, the son of Gurgin, as his heir. There are two possible explanations. One is that David despite the agreement reached in 990-991 had no intention of allowing his territories to fall to Byzantium after his death. He might have tacitly determined on this course out of loyalty to his adopted son and supposed heir, Bagrat III. However, there is no evidence to this effect, and it appears that the second explanation is more probable. David was satisfied with the agreement negotiated with Basil II, in particular the clause that permitted him to retain his lands until his death.

¹⁵Yahyā, PO, 221-222/429-430; Skylitzes, Synopsis, 339; Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 43: 162; Vardan Vardapet, Vseobshchaia Istoriia, 117.

¹⁶Histoire de la Géorgie, I, 292, 294.

¹⁷Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 41: 156, 43: 162.

¹⁸Aristakes de Lastivert, Récit des malheurs de la Nation Arménienne, trans. M. Canard and H. Berberian, (Brussels, 1973), 4-5.

¹⁹Matthew of Edessa, Chronicle, Chapter 24, 34.

²⁰For a consideration of the alleged murder of David see Z. Avalichvili, "La succession du curopalate David," 190.

²¹As maintained by Grousset, Histoire de l'Arménie, 531, and Honigmann, Ostgrenze, 156, Iuzbashian, Povestovanie

Vardapeta Aristakesa Lastiverts'i, (introduction) 21, and Bartikian, "La Conquête de l'Arménie," 333. C. Toumanoff, "The Background to Manzikert," Proceedings of the XIII International Congress of Byzantine Studies (London, 1967), 424, states outright that David died of poison. Schlumberger, L'Épopée Byzantine, II, 162, accepts the story of Matthew of Edessa, stating that David died a violent death but does not attribute it to Byzantine conspiracy.

²²Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 43: 160-161; Yahyā, PO, 252/460.

²³Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 43: 163; for the location of these places see Honigmann, Ostgrenze, 156-157.

²⁴Yahyā, PO, 252/460; Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 43; Ibn al-Azraq, Ta'rīkh al-Fāriqī, 84.

²⁵Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 43: 164-165. Asolik's statement is the only existing indication of the possible size of the Russian contingent (družhina) when it first arrived in Constantinople.

²⁶Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 43: 165. Aristakes Lastiverts'i, Récit des Malheurs, 4-6, calls the slaughter of the azat the punishment of God upon them for their role in the murder of David.

²⁷Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 43: 165, 46; 168-169. Grousset, Histoire de l'Arménie, 533, writes, "It was only thus after having morally annexed Vaspurakan to the Empire that Basil allowed the two Artsruni brothers to depart." But the use of force which Grousset implies is not hinted at by Asolik, the only witness for this meeting.

²⁸G. Ostrogorsky, "The Byzantine Emperor and the Hierarchical World Order," Slavonic and East European Review, 35 (1956), 14, writes, "According to Byzantine conceptions, some rulers held a higher and others a lower rank within the hierarchy of rulers. But the highest rank was held by the Roman emperor in Constantinople, as the bearer of the highest title of sovereign, as the head of the oldest Christian empire, and as the father of all

Christian peoples and the head of the family of rulers." See also Ostrogorsky, "Die Byzantinische Staatenhierarchie," Seminarium Kondakovianum, 8 (1936), 41-61.

²⁹F. Dölger, 'Die "Familie der Könige" im Mittelalter,' Historisches Jahrbuch, 60 (1940), 397-420, in particular 402: "There can be no doubt on the basis of this [preceding] survey that we do not have before us here some random ideas of the Byzantine Imperial Chancery, but the completely systematic and intricate structure of a global family (weltfamilie) of kings, oriented toward the Byzantine Basileus, who is the father in this family with the patria potestas."

³⁰Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 43: 165; Yahyā, PO, 252/460; Aristakes, Récit des Malheurs, 6.

³¹P. Lemerle, 'Prolégomènes à une édition critique et commentée des "Conseils et Récits"', Académie Royale de Belgique, Mémoires, Classe des Lettres, 54 (1960), 32, proposes that Kekaumencs' paternal grandfather, an Armenian in Byzantine service, may have been one of the first Byzantine officials to serve in Tao.

³²Aristakes, Récit des Malheurs, 4-5, says the deaths of the azat were retribution for the murder, perpetrated by them, of the Curopalate David. However, as pointed out earlier, there is ample reason to question whether David really was assassinated. In any case, the statement that it was their opposition to the annexation of Upper Tao by Byzantium which led the azat into the skirmish with the Varangians, as made by Iuzbashian, Povestovanie, (introduction), 21, is an unjustified perversion of the actual words of both Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 43: 164-165, and Aristakes.

³³Honigmann, Ostgrenze, 160-161.

³⁴Toumanoff, "The Bagratids of Iberia from the Eighth to the Eleventh Century," Le Muséon, 74 (1961), 313, thinks these territories actually belonged to David. But Honigmann, Ostgrenze, 159, is expressly uncertain.

³⁵V. Arutiunova-Fidanian, "Vizantiiski Praviteli Femi Iveriiia" Akademiia Nauk Armianskoi S. S. R., Vestnik Obshestvennikh Nauk, 1973, #2, 64, who mistakenly follows Aristakes Lastiverts'i's incorrect dating for the annexation of Upper Tao to 1001.

³⁶H. Ahrweiler, Recherches sur l'Administration de l'Empire Byzantin, IXe-XIe Siècles, Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique, 84 (1960), 59, 65.

³⁷Information on the rivalry of the Būyids, ^CUqayl, and Marwānids comes from Abū Shujā^C al-Rūdhrawarī, Dhayl Tajarib al-Umam, III, 43-46, 175-179, 239-240, Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, IX, 54-55, 66-67, 70-75, 92-93. Ibn al-Azraq al-Fariqī, Ta'rīkh Mayyāfāriqīn, 53-63; Bar Hebraeus, Mukhtasar Ta'rīkh al-Duwal, 301-302. One common narrative, evidently that of Hilāl al-Ṣābī, is at the base of all these accounts. It appears that Ibn al-Azraq has added to Hilāl's basic account. See also al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 270.

³⁸Ibn al-Azraq, Ta'rīkh Mayyāfāriqīn, 61, Abū Shujā^C, Dhayl Tajarib al-Umam, III, 247, Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, IX, 94, Bar Hebraeus, Chronography, I, 178, Mukhtasar Ta'rīkh al-Duwal, 309.

³⁹Ibn al-Qalānisī, Dhayl Ta'rīkh Dimashq, 30-31; Ibn al-Dawādārī, Kanz al-Durar, VI, 219-222; al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 259-260; Ibn Zāfir, B. M. Or. 3685, 19r-19v.

⁴⁰Yahyā, PO, 227/435; al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 269.

⁴¹Ibn al-Qalānisī, Dhayl Ta'rīkh Dimashq, 33-39; Abū Shujā^C, Dhayl Tajarib al-Umam, III, 208-217; Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, IX, 85-89; Ibn Zāfir, B. M. Or. 3685, 19v-21v.

⁴²Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 269; Ibn al-Dawādārī, Kanz al-Durar, VI, 232; Ibn al-Qalānisī, Dhayl Ta'rīkh Dimashq, 40.

⁴³Yahyā, PO, 224/432; for the date of Ya^Cqūb b. Killis' death, see PO, 225/432.

⁴⁴Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 269; al-Musabbihī is the probable source. cf. Ibn Muyassar, Annales d'Égypte, 49.

⁴⁵Yahyā, PO, 228/436; Ibn al-Qalānisī, Dhayl Ta'rīkh Dimashq, 40; Ibn al-Dawādārī, Kanz al-Durar, VI, 232-233; al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 269-270; Ibn Zāfir, B. M. Or. 3685, 23r.

⁴⁶The speech is given by Ibn al-Qalānisī, Dhayl Ta'rīkh Dimashq, 32, Ibn al-Sayrāfī, al-Ishāra, 23, Ibn al-Jawzī, al-Muntazam, VII, 156, Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt al-A^Cyān, VII, 33. Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kamīl, IX, 77. This particular combination of sources suggests that the story of Ibn Killis' speech originated with Hilāl al-Šabī. See chapter 5, fn. 142.

⁴⁷On the introduction of the khutba to the Fātimids at Aleppo in A.H. 376 see Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, I, 178.

⁴⁸Yahyā, PO, 230/438.

⁴⁹al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 275.

⁵⁰On ^CImm see Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 236, #195; Yāqūt, Mu^Cjam al-Buldān, III, 729.

⁵¹Yahyā, PO, 230-231/438-439; al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 275.

⁵²Abū Shujā^C, Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam, 218; Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī in Ibn al-Qalānisī, Dhayl Ta'rīkh Dimashq, 41, fn. 1; Ibn Taghrībirdī, al-Nujūm al-Zāhira, IV, 119. See the discussion on al-Shimshātī in Chapter 3 above concerning Hilāl's confusion of the battle in 992 with that in 994. See also Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 239-266, #214; Schlumberger, L'Épopée Byzantine, II, 74-84; Honigmann, Ostgrenze, 105-106; Canard, Dynastie des H'amdānides, 696-705.

⁵³Canard, Dynastie des H'amdānides, 690, fn. 249.

⁵⁴Abū Shujā^C, Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam, 219; Ibn al-Qalānisī, Dhayl Ta'rīkh Dimashq, 43; Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil,

IX, 89; Ibn Zāfir, B. M. Or. 3685, 23r, claims that Manjūtakīn withdrew from Aleppo in 'Ramadān, 382/October 31-November 29, 992.

⁵⁵Yahyā, PO, 231/439.

⁵⁶Ibn Zāfir, B. M. Or. 3685, 23r; the sources of his information cannot be identified.

⁵⁷Yahyā, PO, 231-232/439-440.

⁵⁸Matthew of Edessa, Chronicle, 29; 38-39.

⁵⁹Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 281.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, 281. This siege of Aleppo began roughly two months before the battle which took place near Apamea, 6 Sha^Cbān, 384/September 15, 994.

⁶¹Ibn al-Dawādārī, Kanz al-Durar, VI, 234-235, and Ibn Zāfir, B. M. Or. 3685, 23r-23v, and Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 240-241, all propose that the Byzantine general Asabī^C al-Dhahab (Leo Melissenos) induced Burtzes to fight despite his inferiority in manpower. This is probably the pure, original version of al-Shimshātī; see Chapter 3, part 1 of this thesis. Yahyā claims that it was the Aleppans who successfully urged giving battle upon Burtzes. Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 281, also gives a notice of this battle taken from Ibn al-Dawādārī and Ibn Zāfir's source.

⁶²Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 282-284.

⁶³*Ibid.*, I, 285.

⁶⁴Yahyā, PO, 234/442; al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 285; Ibn Zāfir, B. M. Or., 3685, 23v-24r.

⁶⁵Yahyā, PO, 234/442; al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 285-286; Ibn Zāfir, B. M. Or. 3685, 23v-24r; Rozen, Imperator

Vasilij, 241, #214. Ibn al-Dawādārī, Kanz al-Durar, VI, 237.

⁶⁶Ibn al-Qalānisi, Dhayl, 43; also Ibn Zāfir, B. M. Or. 3685, 24r; Ibn Taghrībirdī, al-Nujūm al-Zāhira, IV, 120; Abū Shujā^C, Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam, 221.

⁶⁷Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 286, for the attack on Apamea; Ibn al-Qalānisi, Dhayl, 43, Ibn Zāfir, B. M. Or. 3685, 24r. The attack on Shayzar may be confused with the campaign of 999, which Hilāl al-Ṣābī appears to have ignored. Yahyā mentions the attack on Shayzar in 999, PO, 249/457. On the other hand, it was probably customary for Byzantine armies invading Syria to attack both the neighboring cities of Apamea and Shayzar, which had, after all, been part of the territory of the Hamdānid amirate.

⁶⁸Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 32, calls the attack in Dhū al-Hijja, 389 the third attack (dakhl). The two earlier attacks were those of Nicephoros Phocas, dated in 358 (it actually took place in 357), and Bardas Phocas in 373.

⁶⁹Bar Hebraeus, Chronography, I, 180. This fact may be from Hilāl al-Ṣābī, who appears to be the source of the rest of Bar Hebraeus' information on this campaign.

⁷⁰Canard, Dynastie des H'amdānides, 858. Canard's view appears to be based on the statement of Ibn al-Qalānisi, Dhayl, 42, that al-^CAzīz supplied Manjūtakīn's army with 100,000 bags of grain by ship from Egypt. It was then sent north via Apamea.

⁷¹Ibn al-Qalānisi, Dhayl, 44; Abu Shujā^C, Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam, 221, Taghrībirdī, al-Nujūm al-Zāhira, IV, 121.

⁷²Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 286.

⁷³Nazzāl, the former governor, must have died in the interval between 991, in which year he was alleged to have deserted Bakjūr, and 995.

⁷⁴Yahyā, PO, 235/443; al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 286.

⁷⁵Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 236; Yahyā, PO, 235-236/443-444; Ibn Zāfir, B. M. Or. 3685, 24r. The location of the Jabal ibn Mas^Cūd is not clear.

⁷⁶Yahyā, PO, 236-237/444-445.

⁷⁷Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 285, 293.

⁷⁸Ibid., 287; Ibn Muyassar, Annales, 50.

⁷⁹Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 288; Ibn Zāfir, B. M. Or. 3685, 24r. Al-Maqrīzī places this information before the entries he makes for the month of Ramadān, 385/September 29-October 28, 995, which indicates that Basil had returned to Byzantine territory from the Syrian campaign in time for a Byzantine legate to arrive in Cairo before September 29, 995.

⁸⁰Both Yahyā, PO, 241/449, and al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 290, give the date as a Friday in Rabī^C II, 385, but as Yahyā's date--"Seventeen days remaining in Rabī^C II" is both in itself a strange way to give a date (why not simply "12 Rabī^C II"?) and was not actually a Friday, al-Maqrīzī's date is preferable. Also for this incident al-Maqrīzī, Khitat, II, 195-196, where al-Musabbiḥī is cited as the source. See also Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 293-300, #229.

⁸¹Yahyā, PO, 240/448; al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 290.

⁸²Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 291; Ibn Muyassar, Annales, 50.

⁸³Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, I, 287, places this expedition in Shawwāl, 385, after telling of Basil's Syrian campaign. Often al-Maqrīzī interpolates passages on Syria in toto. Here al-Maqrīzī may have put the siege of Antartūs under the wrong year when he grouped it with the

events of the Syrian campaign in 995. Yahyā, PO, 241/449, says the new fleet (built after the shipyard fire, 23 Rabī^c II, 386/May 15, 996) arrived at Anṭartūs while Manjūtakin was besieging the town. The Fātimid fleet could only have arrived at Anṭartūs late in the year, for instance in Shawwāl, five months after the fire.

⁸⁴Yahyā, PO, 241-242/449-450.

⁸⁵Ibid., 236/444.

⁸⁶From what Yahyā says, PO, 235-236/443-444, it appears that Basil appointed Dalassenos governor at Antioch only after the conclusion of his Syrian campaign when he returned to Antioch. Basil II began the Syrian campaign from Aleppo, May 4 or 5, 995, but the date of his withdrawal from Muslim territory is not known. It was certainly prior to 1 Ramadān, 385/September 29, 995 since al-Maqrīzī, Itti^cāz, I, 288, dates the arrival of Basil's ambassador in Cairo, bringing news of Basil's withdrawal from Muslim territory, before the notices for the month of Ramadān. The invasion route Basil followed in 995 and 999 was almost the same. In 999 one day less than three months (88 days) was necessary to traverse the distance from Jisr al-Hadīd, which was at the spot where the Byzantine-Muslim border intersected the Antioch-Aleppo road, to the Byzantine-Muslim border north of Tripoli. Thus, following the same schedule in 995, he would have withdrawn from Muslim territory about August 1, 995. However, in 999 Basil was to spend only twelve days at Tripoli. In 995 the siege of that city lasted forty to fifty days, according to the statement of Hilāl al-Ṣābī. Taking that period into account, Basil would have departed from Muslim territory between August 28 and September 7. For that reason it seems accurate to place Damian Dalassenos' appointment at Antioch in the second half of September, 995. V. Laurent dates it to A.D. 996--surely too late. See his "La chronologie des gouverneurs d'Antioche sous la seconde domination Byzantine," Mélanges de l'Université Saint Joseph, 1962 (38), 234.

⁸⁷Yahyā, PO, 236/444. On al-Lakma see R. Dussaud, Topographie Historique de la Syrie, 147-148.

⁸⁸On Rafah see Yāqūt, Mu^cjam al-Buldān, II, 796; Yahyā, PO, 244/452; al-Maqrīzī, Itti^cāz, II, 10.

⁸⁹Yahyā, PO, 244/452.

⁹⁰Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^cāz, II, 12-13; Ibn Muyassar, Annales, 55; Yahyā, PO, 245/453.

⁹¹Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^cāz, II, 15; Ibn al-Dawādārī, Kanz al-Durar, VI, 271; Ibn al-Qalānisī, Dhayl, 50.

⁹²Yahyā, PO, 246/454; al-Maqrīzī, Itti^cāz, II, 18; Ibn al-Qalānisī, Dhayl, 50.

⁹³Yahyā, PO, 246-247/454-455; al-Maqrīzī, Itti^cāz, II, 18; Ibn al-Qalānisī, Dhayl, 50; Abū Shujā^c, Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam, 226; Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, IX, 120, Bar Hebraeus, Chronography, I, 181.

⁹⁴Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 307, #256, followed by Canard, Dynastie des H'amdānides, 705, 707, believes that the Fātimids held Apamea at this time. Actually, Basil II captured Apamea during the Syrian campaign in 995, al-Maqrīzī, Itti^cāz, I, 286. The texts do not clearly indicate who ruled it in 998, but there is no reason to conclude that it was not still in Byzantine hands in the absence of further evidence. If the Fātimids held it prior to the attack by Dalassenos, Jaysh b. al-Ṣamsāma's apathy in aiding the garrison besieged by the Hamdānids is not easily explicable. Moreover, why did he have to be summoned to the aid of the population later? The evidence suggests that the dispute was originally between the Byzantines and Hamdānids. The local population called in the Fātimids finally because they opposed a reversion to Byzantine government.

⁹⁵Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^cāz, II, 19; Yahyā, PO, 248/456. See also Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 37.

⁹⁶Yahyā, PO, 248/456.

⁹⁷Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 19.

⁹⁸Yahyā, PO, 249/457, says that Basil II invaded Syria, 6 Shawwāl, 389/September 20, 999, and withdrew from Tripoli, 5 Muharram, 390/December 19, 999. Yahyā then carelessly reckons the duration of his campaign in Muslim territory as one day less than two months. Obviously, one day less than three months had elapsed.

⁹⁹Ibid., 242-253/460-461.

¹⁰⁰Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, I, 192, is the only author to mention an attack on Apamea at this time. See also Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 42, according to whom Basil revisited the place (near Apamea) where Dalassenos' army was defeated in order to gather the bones of the fallen Byzantines and bury them in one place. Over them he built a church.

¹⁰¹According to Yahyā, PO, 249/457. Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 32; Ibn al-Qalānisī, Dhayl, 43, and Ibn Zāfir, B. M. 3685, 24r, followed by Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 241, attribute this incident to Basil's Syrian campaign in 995. As Hilāl al-Ṣābī, who was most certainly their source, did not mention the second Syrian campaign in 999, it appears that he has mistakenly conflated the events of both campaigns.

¹⁰²Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 42; al-^CAynī, m. s. Institut Narodov Azii, Leningrad, 99a, as quoted in Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 311. On these toponyms see Honigmann, Ostgrenze, 107, 109, fn. 4, and 110, fn. 5.

¹⁰³Yahyā, PO, 250/458; al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 32.

¹⁰⁴Yahyā, PO, 250/458.

¹⁰⁵Al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 32.

¹⁰⁶Yahyā, PO, 251/459; there is no evidence that the Byzantines actually occupied Jubayl and Beirut.

¹⁰⁷Yahyā, PO, 251/459: al-Maqrīzī, Itti^cāz, II, 32.

¹⁰⁸Yahyā, PO, 251/459.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., 253/461.

¹¹⁰For Hilāl al-Ṣābī's viewpoint see Ibn al-Qalānisī, Dhayl, 54; Abū Shujā^c, Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam, 230; Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, IX, 77.

¹¹¹M. Canard, "L'Impérialisme des Fatimides et leur propagande," Annales de l'Institut d'études orientales Alger, 6 (1942-1947), 156-193, especially 158, 171.

¹¹²Abū Shujā^c, Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam, 280-284, 293; Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, IX, 125-156. Ibn al-Dawādārī, Kanz al-Durar, VI, 283, gives Qasr b. Hubayra in another instance where the sources following Hilāl give only "al-Qasr." See also Busse, Chalif und Grosskönig, 74.

¹¹³Abū Shujā^c, Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam, 304, 389. Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, IX, 134-135.

¹¹⁴Although A.H. 386 is usually taken as the date of al-Ḥasan b. Marwān's death, in fact, Ibn al-Azraq, who is apparently the source of this date, gives 386 in one place and 387 in two others: Ta'rīkh al-Fāriqī, 72, 77, 92. Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī, Mir'āt al-Zamān, Paris Arabe 5866, 156r, places al-Ḥasan's death under A.H. 387. Sibṭ re-counts in the same words as Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, IX, 72-74; Abū Shujā^c, Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam, 72-77; Ibn al-Azraq, Ta'rīkh al-Fāriqī, 72-86, and Bar Hebraeus, Ta'rīkh Mukhtaṣar al-Duwal, 173, how al-Ḥasan b. Marwān met his death. Hilāl al-Ṣābī is therefore the probable source of this story as well of almost everything that is known of the Marwanid and Uqaylid dynasties in these years. There-

fore, it appears tha A.H. 387 was the actual year of al-Hasan b. Marwān's death.

¹¹⁵ Ibn al-Azraq, Ta'rīkh al-Fāriqī, 86.

¹¹⁶ Busse, Chalif und Grosskönig, 78-79.

CHAPTER 9

BYZANTINE EASTERN POLICY, 1001-1025:

CONSERVATIVE IMPERIALISM

After the conclusion of the Byzantine-Fāṭimid treaty, which was signed in A.D. 1000, or possibly as late as 1001, relations between the two dominant powers of the eastern Mediterranean never resumed their former level of hostility. The treaty itself inaugurated a period of half a century of generally friendly relations between Cairo and Constantinople. These, however, did not prevent instances of conflict over the unresolved position of Aleppo, which remained an apple of discord. The Byzantines struggled to maintain it as a protectorate securely under their influence while the Fāṭimids coveted it as the next stepping-stone toward the conquest of Iraq and "world dominion."¹

In view of these contradictions, perhaps it is not strange that, as Yaḥyā b. Saʿīd says, al-Ḥākim was ready to go to war with Byzantium in the period immediately preceding his death.²

The Istanbul manuscript utilized in the recently-published edition of the Ittiʿāz al-Hunafāʾ by al-Maqrīzī

identifies four diplomatic exchanges between Cairo and Constantinople which are now known to have taken place in the period 391-405/1001-1014.

The first of these was an embassy from the Emperor Basil II to al-Ḥākim. The Byzantine ambassador reportedly arrived in Cairo, 16 Jumādā II, 391/May 13, 1001, amidst a splendid reception which the Caliph had arranged. However, the purpose of the ambassador's mission never becomes clear. It may have been to obtain ratification of the treaty which had been concluded in Constantinople. The actual signature of that treaty may have been postponed until the Emperor Basil returned from Armenia. He could not have arrived back in Constantinople before late in 1000.³

The next documented Byzantine-Fāṭimid embassy occurs in 403/1012-1013 when al-Ḥākim sent a gift of 7,000 dīnārs to the Byzantine emperor. Presumably, this followed the renewal of the original treaty, the duration of which had been set at ten years. In 404/1013-1014 al-Ḥākim sent another ambassador, whose name is given as ^CAbd al-Ghanī b. Sa^Cīd, with a generous gift to Constantinople. This time a Byzantine ambassador, who had arrived in Cairo in the course of the preceding year, accompanied him. Again, nothing is known of the purpose of this mission nor that of a Byzantine ambassador to Cairo in Jumādā II, 405/November 27-December 25, 1014, who arrived with ^CAbd

al-Ghanī b. Sa^Cīd.⁴ A magnificent reception was staged to receive this, the final Byzantine ambassador to the Fāṭimid court whom al-Maqrīzī mentions, presumably on the authority of al-Musabbihī.

Subsequently, the Byzantine Emperor ordered the termination of all trade and travel between the territories of the Byzantine empire and the Fāṭimid caliphate. Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd, who is the only chronicler to mention this abrupt break in Byzantine-Fāṭimid relations, does not give the exact date, but it appears that Basil II's order was issued after a rebellion in Aleppo in January, 1016 permitted the Fāṭimids to introduce their own governor into the city.⁵

To understand this deterioration in Byzantine-Fāṭimid relations, it is necessary to review events in north Syria and the amirate of Aleppo from 1000 to 1016. The power of the minor tribal dynasties, strung out along the Byzantine border from the Ḥamdānids in Aleppo to the ^CUqaylids in Mosul, rested on only the military ability of Arab horsemen. Therefore, they presented a potential nuisance rather than a military threat to Byzantium. Skylitzes says that in the fourteenth indiction, which corresponds to A.D. 1000-1001, the newly-appointed commander at Antioch, Nicephoros Uranos set out to chastise the Numayr and the Banū al-Waththāb, which had been raiding the theme of Antioch and a strip of Byzantine territory (Coelo-Syria)

protruding south along the Mediterranean coast. After two or three battles, Uranos persuaded the amir whom Skylitzes calls Kitrinitēs to make peace with the Byzantines and peace was restored to this corner of the Empire.⁶

Shortly afterwards, on 15 Ṣafar, 392/January 2, 1002, the Hamdānīd amir of Aleppo Abū al-Faḍā'il Sa'īd al-Dawla died. Although a brother and two sons survived him, actual rule was exercised by Lu'lu', who already during the reign of Abū al-Faḍā'il controlled the government of Aleppo. Lu'lu''s deputy was his son Mansūr, who doubtlessly played an active role, owing to his father's advanced age.⁷

Lu'lu' at first at least nominally recognized Abū al-Faḍā'il's two sons Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī and Abū al-Ma'ālī Sharīf as the successors to the amirate, but in 394/October 30, 1003–October 17, 1004 he decided to put an end to their fictitious supremacy. The two princes were either exiled or permitted to go into exile at al-Ḥākim's court while, their uncle Abū al-Hayjā' fled in woman's garb to the Byzantine empire.⁸ Essentially, Lu'lu' as the independent ruler of Aleppo, followed the same policy toward the amirate's powerful neighbors as he had previously as deputy to Abū al-Faḍā'il. As a result of more than a decade's acquaintance, Lu'lu' was already a known quantity to both Byzantines and Fāṭimids. This explains why the expulsion of the Hamdānīd epigones did not produce an unfavorable reaction in either Constantinople or Cairo.

In 393/1002-1003 Lu'lu' ordered three fortresses in the amirate of Aleppo dismantled, but it is not clear what the significance of this action was and with whom in view it was taken.⁹ Lu'lu''s order may have had either a defensive or a conciliatory purpose.

A threat to Aleppo's peaceful relations with its neighbors arose in 395/October 18, 1004-October 7, 1005 in the form of a self-proclaimed warrior for the Muslim faith (ghāzī) Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn Aṣfar-Taghlib, known as al-Aṣfar, who appeared in the amirate and attacked and seized Shayzar. Then he surprised the Byzantine commander at Artāḥ (Artach) on the Aleppo-Antioch road and crossed the Orontes at the Iron Bridge. There al-Aṣfar's luck deserted him. A certain Bighas, a former subordinate of Skleros, put al-Aṣfar's untrained mob of fanatics to flight.¹⁰

Al-Aṣfar fled to Kafr ^CAzūn, a fortified estate near Sarūj in the Diyār Muḍar, where he took refuge with Waththāb b. Ja^Cfar.¹¹ This Waththāb was probably identical with Waththāb b. Sābik al-Numayrī, the first known representative of the Waththāb dynasty of Ḥarrān and Sarūj.¹²

After besieging Kafr ^CAzūn for twenty-eight days, Bighas finally occupied the estate and took 12,000 prisoners. Al-Aṣfar, however, had made good his escape, and a new coalition of 6,000 horsemen of the Numayr and Kilāb tribes gathered around him and Waththāb. Bighas defeated this

force also, but still Waththāb refused to abandon al-Aṣfar. He feared that if he handed al-Aṣfar over to the Byzantines, there would be a religiously-inspired Muslim reaction against him.

At this point Lu'lu' again demonstrated the value of his friendship to the Byzantines. Either by deception, as Ibn al-^CAdīm claims, or, more likely, simply by his influence with Waththāb, as Yaḥyā b. Sa^Cīd says, Lu'lu' obtained custody of al-Aṣfar whom he incarcerated in the citadel at Aleppo. There he would no longer threaten to embroil the Arabs in warfare against the Byzantines. This took place in Sha^Cbān, 397/April 22-May 20, 1007 after al-Aṣfar had been active for two years in the Byzantine-Muslim border land.¹³

The Kilāb tribe, which joined the Numayr in resisting the Byzantine attempts to seize al-Aṣfar, soon achieved a much more prominent place in Syrian and Aleppan affairs. Lu'lu''s death in Muḥarram, 399/September 5-October 4, 1008 served as a signal to the Kilāb to begin carving up the amirate which Lu'lu''s son Mansūr inherited.¹⁴ During 399/September 5, 1008-August 24, 1009, Ṣāliḥ b. Mirdās, a Kilāb chief, occupied Raḥba, a crucial Euphrates crossing point in central Syria, the possession of which had been contested between the Banū Khafāja, the ^CUqayl, and the Fāṭimids before Ṣāliḥ took it and made it the base of his power. However, the khutba continued to be given in al-Raḥba in the name of the Fāṭimid caliph.¹⁵

Mansūr b. Lu'lu' did not find much favor with the population of Aleppo or among the amirs of the Banu Kilāb who wielded extensive power at the local level in the amirate. Mansūr's oppressive rule may have inspired this hostility or it may have been his friendly feelings toward the Fātimids. Before his father's death he had sent his two sons Abū al-Ghanā'im and Abū al-Barakāt to Egypt as his ambassadors. Al-Hākim had received the sons generously and conferred the laqab Murtaḍā al-Dawla on Mansūr.¹⁶ Certainly, Mansūr consciously courted al-Hākim's support for the day when Lu'lu''s death would bring out into the open the numerous contenders for control of the ramshackle remnant of the Hamdānid amirate.

The weakness of the government in Aleppo was not hidden from the tribal amirs. Only Lu'lu''s strong personality had perpetuated the existence of the shrunken state in spite of its diminished resources. Although the chroniclers picture Mansūr b. Lu'lu' as a tyrannical ruler, it should be pointed out that the shakiness of his position as amir and his awareness that others were eager to oust him may have left him no recourse but to employ harsh methods of repression.¹⁷

In 400/August 25, 1009-August 14, 1010 some citizens of Aleppo and the Kilāb amirs sought the restoration of the Hamdānid dynasty in the person of Abū al-Hayjā' b. Sa^cd al-Dawla who was living in Constantinople as a refugee. At

first, Basil II was clearly reluctant to allow Abū al-Hayjā' to leave Byzantine territory for the purpose of interfering in Aleppan affairs. Very influential in reversing Basil's decision was the voice of Mumahhid al-Dawla (387-401/997-1011), the Marwānid amir of the Diyār Bakr and Abū al-Hayjā''s father-in-law, who also held the imperial rank of magister and whom a decade earlier Basil had appointed Dux of the East. Mumahhid al-Dawla assured Basil that he would help Abū al-Hayjā' to reclaim the amirate and that the Emperor would not be called on to contribute either troops or funds. Indubitably, he also made rosy assurances of the project's success.¹⁸

However, Mumahhid al-Dawla was able to offer Abū al-Hayjā' the services of only two hundred horsemen. Abū al-Hayjā' then found himself dependent on the pledges of support from the Kilāb amirs who promised their aid until he had established himself as amir. With these commitments Abū al-Hayjā' set out in 400/1009-1010 from Mayyā-fāriqīn to capture Aleppo.¹⁹

Word of Abū al-Hayjā''s preparations had reached Manṣūr b. Lu'lu', who first of all attempted to win over the Kilāb. In this he was successful by promising extensive iqṭa^cs and offering to make the Kilāb partial owners of his estates outside the city. Manṣūr b. Lu'lu' then sought help from the Fāṭimids. For immediate military aid Manṣūr offered to allow the Fāṭimids to introduce their

representative into the citadel of Aleppo. He made this proposal to ^CAlī b. ^CAbd al-Wāḥid b. Ḥaydara, the qādī of Tripoli, who, possibly with the consent of al-Ḥākim, to whom he was linked by pigeon post, hurried to intercept Abū al-Ḥayjā'. With the arrival of the Fāṭimid army, the Kilāb deserted Abū al-Ḥayjā' and went over to Mansūr b. Lu'lu'.

Abū al-Ḥayjā''s only recourse was flight. He went first to Melitene where he petitioned the Emperor for permission to resettle in the Empire, but Basil, disgusted with the fiasco in which the attempt to seize Aleppo had ended, was inclined to refuse him. It was actually Mansūr b. Lu'lu', who, fearing the trouble Abū al-Ḥayjā' might cause if forced to remain in Muslim territory, petitioned the Emperor and obtained permission for the Ḥamdānid prince to return to Constantinople.²⁰

Rescued from the Scylla of a Ḥamdānid restoration, Mansūr b. Lu'lu' found himself face to face with the Charybdis of Fāṭimid occupation of the Aleppan citadel. By allowing a Fāṭimid wālī in the citadel the city would become vulnerable to a Fāṭimid coup. Mansūr b. Lu'lu' was also bound by his word to distribute extensive iqṭa^Cs and estates to the Kilāb. The loss of the revenues from these lands would further decrease the Amir's resources and weaken his grasp on power. Mansūr's solution to the crisis brought about by his hastily-given promises was simple.

He ignored them. The Fāṭimid Ibn Ḥaydara was sent back to Tripoli empty-handed and the demands of the Kilāb for the rewards of their treachery were rebuffed. The Kilāb responded by taking control of the outlying districts of Aleppo and doing everything in their power to bring down Mansūr. He was powerless to react with force.²¹

Mansūr b. Lu'lu''s unfulfilled promise to the Fāṭimids appears to have initiated a brief period of bitterness in his relations with them. In 402/1011-1012 Abū al-Ma^cālī Sharīf, one of the two sons of the last Ḥamdānid amir of Aleppo Abū al-Faḍā'il, was placed at the head of a Fāṭimid army which was sent against Aleppo. Abū al-Ma^cālī Sharīf, however, did not excite sufficient enthusiasm among the Bedouin to induce them to approach closer to Aleppo than Ma^carrat al-Nu^cmān. The Fāṭimid commander Naṣr Illāh b. Nazzāl broke off the campaign, and the Ḥamdānid prince returned to Egypt.²²

In the same year Mansūr b. Lu'lu' tried to crush the Kilāb's hostility to him by means of an ancient piece of treachery. He arranged a banquet, 2 Dhū al-Qa^cda, 402/ May 26, 1012, within the walls of Aleppo at which the promised iqṭa^cs were to be distributed. The members of the Kilāb who attended are said to have numbered between 500 and 1000. Yaḥyā b. Sa^cīd gives their number at 700.²³ While the Kilāb were off their guard, indulging in the lavish banquet, Mansūr ordered his followers to attack them.

Those who were not slaughtered were incarcerated. Among these was Ṣālih b. Mirdās who, as we have seen, had established himself at Rahba in 399/1008-1009. The Kilāb were rendered temporarily leaderless. About a year later, Manṣūr released some of the imprisoned Bedouin, but these were almost certainly those whom Manṣūr had won over or feared least.²⁴

It was probably the increasing pressure from the Kilāb in combination with Manṣūr's deteriorating authority which led him to release some of the Kilāb prisoners and then to negotiate an understanding with al-Ḥākim.

In Ramadān, 404/March 6-April 4, 1014, al-Ḥākim issued a decree officially recognizing Manṣūr's sovereignty over Aleppo and its dependencies. In return, Manṣūr must certainly have offered some concessions, which, however, have remained unknown.²⁵

The escape of Ṣālih b. Mirdās from custody in the Aleppo citadel during the night of 1 Muḥarram, 405/July 2, 1014 rapidly transformed Manṣūr's situation from difficult to critical. The reactivated Kilāb tribe under Ṣālih's leadership forced Manṣūr to mobilize every man at his disposal, including the rabble and even his Christian and Jewish subjects.²⁶ Thus, it seems that Manṣūr's authority had shrunk to the extent that it did not reach past the edges of the city itself. Manṣūr led his motley army out to Tell Ḥāsid where, on 12 Ṣafar, 405/August 12, 1014,

Ṣālih b. Mirdās and the Kilāb overwhelmed it. Manṣūr b. Lu'lu' was captured, but his brother Abū Jaysh managed to escape and keep Ṣālih out of Aleppo.

As Ṣālih b. Mirdās could not take the fortified city by force--being inexperienced in and unequipped for siege warfare--he sought to barter his captive Manṣūr for a peace agreement. The most important clauses of the treaty, which was finally agreed upon, stipulated that one half the territory of the amirate of Aleppo would be given to the Kilāb as their *iqṭa'*^c and that Manṣūr could not do favors for any member of Kilāb or satisfy any requests from its members except through Ṣālih b. Mirdās. In other words, Manṣūr agreed not to conspire to woo away Ṣālih's support among the Kilāb. After only ten days in captivity, Manṣūr was released and returned to Aleppo.

Manṣūr b. Lu'lu' again did nothing to carry out the promises he had made to Ṣālih, and the Kilāb retaliated by placing the city in a state of siege. Manṣūr b. Lu'lu' turned not to his Fāṭimid allies but to the Emperor Basil, asking for military aid with which to oppose the Bedouins. In response, Basil II sent 1000 Armenians, who allowed Manṣūr to drive away the Bedouin Arabs.

When Ṣālih b. Mirdās wrote to the Emperor of the deceit he had met at the hands of Manṣūr b. Lu'lu', Basil II withdrew his troops and advised Manṣūr to fulfill his agreement with Ṣālih. At the same time Ṣālih offered his

loyalty and clientage to Basil II and sent his son to the Imperial court as a surety for the sincerity of his pledges.²⁷ From then until the death of al-Hākīm it appears that Ṣāliḥ b. Mirdās represented Byzantine interests in the territory of Aleppo.

Manṣūr then tried to escape the hopelessness of his situation by replacing his subordinate in command of the citadel, Fath al-Qala^Cī, whom he suspected of freeing Ṣāliḥ. Fath, however, resisted out of fear. He and his adherents arranged that on the night of 24 Rajab, 406/January 7, 1016 they would create a great hubbub, blowing their bugles and beating their drums, as if al-Hākīm and Ṣāliḥ b. Mirdās had seized the city. On the appointed night, Manṣūr heard the cries "Hākīm, O Manṣūr! Ṣāliḥ, O Manṣūr!" Manṣūr allegedly panicked and fled precipitately toward the Byzantine frontier.²⁸ Although this colorful story may appear to be lacking in verisimilitude, it is the one told by Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd, uncontradicted by other sources, of Manṣūr's eviction from Aleppo.

Fath al-Qala^Cī, once Manṣūr had fled the city, immediately summoned ^CAlī b. Aḥmad al-Dayf, the Fāṭimid wālī at Apamea, who entered the city in early Sha^Cbān/January, 1016. Fath himself could not have possessed enough troops to raise the Kilāb's siege if they resisted him. Thus, the Fāṭimids finally entered the city of Aleppo, but Fath continued to hold on to the citadel. Ṣāliḥ b.

Mirdās and the Kilāb took possession of all the lands which Mansūr b. Lu'lu' had formerly promised.²⁹

At this juncture, the Emperor Basil II forbade all travel and commerce between all of his empire and any part of Syria, or Egypt, according to Yahyā b. Sa^cīd.³⁰ This was an unmistakably anti-Fāṭimid action. When Ṣāliḥ b. Mirdās asked that the act not apply to the lands he controlled, Basil II consented to his request. Thus, the Fāṭimids, in gaining some measure of direct control over Aleppo, kindled the hostility of the Byzantine Emperor and the Banū Kilāb, who then coalesced to prevent the Fāṭimids from exploiting their newly-won advantage.

The Kilāb were a convenient tool of Byzantine influence. Ṣāliḥ b. Mirdās already held al-Raḥba and with the addition of Manbij and Bālis, of which he took control about 1016, he dominated the whole eastern or Mesopotamian part of the amirate of Aleppo.³¹ Ṣāliḥ b. Mirdās was virtually at the head of a state within a state.

The Byzantines also held the deposed amir of Aleppo in reserve. They gave Mansūr b. Lu'lu' a handsome estate at Shaykh al-Laylūn in the Jabal Laylūn between Aleppo and Antioch from which he could keep well abreast of affairs in Aleppo.³² Basil II ordered the katepan of Antioch to treat Mansūr with the same deference that he had been accustomed to as amir of Aleppo, and 700 of Mansūr's ghilmān were maintained as a private army. The Emperor also summoned

Manṣūr's brothers Abū Jaysh and Abū Sālīm and his sons Abū al-Ghanā'im and Abū al-Barakāt and gave them titles of high rank and office. At the same time Basil II had the fortifications of the citadel at Antioch strengthened.³³ All these actions point to his willingness to turn the events in the amirate of Aleppo into a hot war if necessary.

Alī b. Aḥmad al-Dayf at first reached an agreement with Fath al-Qala^Cī to attack the camp of Ṣāliḥ b. Mirdās, which lay south of Aleppo in the direction of Qinnasrīn. The attack, however, fizzled when the Kilāb anticipated the Fāṭimid and Aleppan plan and attacked first.³⁴ After this defeat the Fāṭimids embarked on a new tack. Al-Ḥākim offered Ṣāliḥ b. Mirdās the laqab Asad al-Dawla and also conferred honorific titles on Fath al-Qala^Cī and al-Dayf.³⁵

The Fāṭimids began to coax Fath to give up the citadel of Aleppo, offering him a lifelong commission as governor of Beirut, Tyre, and Sidon in exchange. Ṣāliḥ b. Mirdās opposed the Fāṭimid persuasion and explained to Fath how together they might resist any outside force that coveted Aleppo.

The people of Aleppo, however, came out into the streets in support of the Fāṭimids. "We want the Maghribīs, not the Bedouin," they are said to have chanted.³⁶ Meanwhile, the Fāṭimid commander al-Dayf called on al-Ḥākim to send every Fāṭimid wālī in Syria to his aid as well as the amirs of the Banū al-Ta'ī and Banū Kalb. Weakening in

this climate of general opposition, Fath gave in to the Fāṭimid offers. ʿAzīz al-Dawla Fāṭik succeeded him in the governorship of Aleppo, 1 Ramadān, 407/February 1, 1017.³⁷

The remission of the kharāj tax, which al-Hākim ordered in advance for the year 407/1016-1017, may explain why the Aleppan population openly called out for Fāṭimid rule. This is the only known incident in which the Aleppan population ever showed pro-Fāṭimid sympathies.³⁸

The advent of Fāṭik in Aleppo was the high water mark of Fāṭimid success in north Syria, at least during al-Hākim's reign. The winning of Aleppo, the veritable "ante-room" (dihlīz) to Iraq, without provoking open warfare with Byzantium gave al-Hākim's Syrian policy the appearance of great effectiveness to that date. The annexation of Aleppo, however, resulted in a complete Byzantine trade and travel boycott and reawakened Byzantine interest and involvement, although limited, in north Syria. This took the form of support for Ṣāliḥ b. Mirdās.

Al-Hākim was never able to exploit his success in north Syria. In the disastrous final years of his life, the whole base of Fāṭimid power in Syria was shaken. According to Ibn al-ʿAdīm, in 408/1017-1018 Fāṭik convinced Ṣāliḥ b. Mirdās to send his mother to live in Aleppo as a guarantee of the modus vivendi, which they had reached.³⁹ Some time thereafter Fāṭik rejected al-Hākim's sovereignty

and openly rebelled. Almost certainly Fātik's defection was motivated by a change in al-Hākīm's attitude toward him or anxiety on his part that such a change, so frequent with al-Hākīm, was in the wind. Fātik had probably made his rapprochement with Ṣālīḥ in anticipation of his need for support in the future.

Meanwhile, Ṣālīḥ b. Mirdās had formed an alliance directed against al-Hākīm with Sinān b. ʿUlayyān of the south Syrian Kalb tribe and with Ḥassan b. al-Mufarrij b. al-Jarrāḥ, the chief of the Palestinian Tā'ī. Al-Hākīm in turn had become suspicious of his wālī ʿAḥd ʿAbd al-Raḥīm b. Ilyās, whom he had appointed governor of Damascus, 25 Jumādā I, 410/September 4, 1019. Word had reached the Caliph that ʿAbd al-Raḥīm was in contact with Ḥassan b. Mufarrij. For this reason, al-Hākīm gave the order for the recall of the wālī ʿAḥd in July, 1020, but ʿAbd al-Raḥīm never went beyond Ramla, which lay in the center of Ḥassan b. al-Mufarrij's territory, before he was ordered back to Damascus. Meanwhile, civil strife had broken out in Damascus.⁴⁰

The date of Fātik's revolt is not precisely known. Certainly it fell in the period 408-28 Shawwāl, 411/May 30, 1017-February 14, 1021 and probably toward its end; therefore, in 1020 or 1021. Fātik informed the Emperor Basil that he wished to be recognized as his client and in turn Basil again legalized commerce between the territories of Aleppo and the Empire.⁴¹

In 411/1020-1021, Byzantine-Fāṭimid tensions almost burst forth into war. Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd says that in that year Gēorgi I, king of Abkhazia, offered al-Hākīm an alliance against Byzantium. Yahyā does not explicitly say that al-Hākīm accepted the overture from the Abkhazian king, but the preparations he made to march against Fāṭik in A.H. 411 would seem to indicate that he did. Fāṭik immediately turned to the Byzantine emperor for help and Basil II set out for Antioch in order to oblige him. Thus, the stage was set for a direct clash between Fāṭimids and Byzantines over Aleppo when al-Hākīm's sudden disappearance on February 14, 1021 abruptly removed the need for Byzantine intervention.⁴² The Emperor then turned toward Georgia to settle affairs there. This feint toward Syria, according to Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd, contributed an element of surprise to Basil II's invasion of Georgia. As for Aleppo, this was the final instance of Basil II's desire to preserve the amirate as a separate and independent entity. There is no evidence that Basil II troubled himself again over the question of Aleppo although it remained under Fāṭimid domination for several more years.

Sitt al-Mulk, the sister of al-Hākīm and the actual ruler of Egypt after his disappearance, carried through the transmission of the Caliphate to al-Hākīm's son al-Zāhir li-^CIzāz Dīn Illāh. This was in place of the wālī ^Cahd ^CAbd al-Rahīm b. Ilyās, whom Sitt al-Mulk succeeded in

eliminating. This turbulent and violent change of rulers immobilized the Fātimids in Syria. Initially, Sitt al-Mulk concentrated on winning back the allegiance of Fātik, which she succeeded in doing during 412/1021-1022. However, in the following year when Fātik's vigilance was relaxed she craftily suborned one of his ghilmān, who murdered him, 4 Rabī^C II, 413/July 6, 1022. After Fātik's removal the Fātimids established a dual wilāya in Aleppo, appointing separate wālīs for the citadel and the city. Several individuals rapidly succeeded one another in these appointments.⁴³

Sitt al-Mulk simultaneously sent Nicephoros, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, to Constantinople for the purpose of reestablishing diplomatic and commercial relations with Byzantium. Of special significance was that in the message the Patriarch Nicephoros presented to Basil II particular attention was paid to the amelioration of the situation of Christians in the Fātimid state. Their churches throughout Syria and Egypt, including the Church of the Resurrection in Jerusalem, had been returned to them, it was claimed in the note.

Such claims must be regarded with suspicion. There is a limit to the extent of church restoration which could have taken place within two or three years. Supposedly, all the churches in the Fātimid caliphate with only a few exceptions had been destroyed during the reign of al-Hākim.

The restoration of the Church of the Resurrection, for instance, remained a subject of diplomatic discourse for some time to come. Yahyā b. Sa^cīd, who is the only chronicler who mentions this embassy, says that the Byzantines rejected the Fāṭimid initiative when they learned that Sitt al-Mulk had died. The Fāṭimid ambassador, Yahyā says, crossed the frontier between Antioch and Tripoli on the return trip to Jerusalem in Ṣafar, 415/April 14-May 12, 1024.⁴⁴

Al-Musabbiḥī, an unimpeachable source, however, placed Sitt al-Mulk's death on 1 Jumādā II, 1015/August 10, 1024. Thus, it appears that Yahyā is mistaken concerning either the date of the embassy or the reason the Egyptian request was rejected. However, Yahyā, as a resident of Antioch, ought to have had firsthand information concerning the date the Fāṭimid ambassador passed by way of Antioch. Therefore, it is more probable that Yahyā was in error concerning the actual explanation for the Egyptian ambassador's premature return home. It certainly seems possible that this was due to Basil II's reluctance to resume diplomatic and commercial ties while Aleppo still remained in Fāṭimid hands.⁴⁵

In Shawwāl, 411/January 18-February 14, 1021, the month in which al-Ḥākim disappeared, the Fāṭimid wālī Muḥammad b. Khālīd al-Nahrānī surrendered the fortress of Ḥiṣn al-Khawābī (modern Qal^cat al-Khawābī) northeast of

Antartūs to the Byzantines along with the ruined coastal fortress of Maraḡiyya. In Muharram, 415/March 15-April 13, 1024 Constantine Dalassenos, the katepan of Antioch, restored Maraḡiyya which led the Fāṭimids to restore Ḥiṣn ^CUllayqa, which was located inland considerably north of Ḥiṣn al-Khawābī.⁴⁶ This was the opening stage of the struggle for possession of the rugged west Syrian mountains. Yaḥyā b. Sa^Cīd has recorded the development of this rivalry over the next decade.

Also in 415/1024-1025 Ṣāliḥ b. Mirdās and the headmen of the Kalb and Tā'ī tribes reaffirmed their anti-Fāṭimid alliance, which they had originally formed in the last years of al-Ḥākim's reign. They asked the Emperor Basil II for military aid and offered open dependence in return. Basil II, however, rejected their request on the grounds that they were rebels against their ruler, that is, the Fāṭimid caliph.⁴⁷

13 Dhū al-Qa^Cda, 415/January 16, 1025 Ṣāliḥ b. Mirdās succeeded in entering and taking control of Aleppo after a siege of fifty-six days, but the Fāṭimids remained in the citadel. Probably because of their own lack of expertise in siege warfare the Mirdāsids sent to the Byzantine katepan at Antioch, Constantine Dalassenos, in search of three hundred men to help with the siege. When Basil II learned that this aid, which violated his earlier refusal to give the Arab amirs support against their

sovereign, had been given by Constantine Dalassenos, he angrily insisted that the three hundred Byzantines be recalled.⁴⁸

Thus, after the death of al-Ḥākim Basil II appears to have readopted a neutral policy toward the politics of north Syria, certainly not pro-Fāṭimid but not pro-Mirdāsīd either. This was despite his reliance on Ṣāliḥ b. Mirdās prior to the death of al-Ḥākim as the instrument through which Byzantine policy was exercised in the territories of Aleppo. Basil II appears to have remained peacefully uncommitted when ʿAzīz al-Dawla Fātik returned to the Fāṭimid fold and the Egyptian dynasty temporarily tightened its hold on the city. Nevertheless, Ṣāliḥ b. Mirdās managed to take Aleppo without Byzantine help. He finally seized the citadel of the city, 1 Jumādā I, 416/June 30, 1025. Meanwhile, Ṣāliḥ was enlarging his state to the south with the annexation of Ḥimṣ, Sidon, and Baalbek.⁴⁹

Thereafter the Mirdāsīd dynasty of Aleppo remained the dominant power in north Syria except for two brief interludes until 1079. Thus, while due to no apparent merit of its own, the success of Basil II's policy of maintaining Aleppo as a Byzantine-Fāṭimid buffer was reaffirmed shortly before his death in December, 1025, and this without fighting a single war in a quarter of a century.

Although Basil II must certainly have been in favor of Mirdāsīd supremacy in north Syria, he remained distinctly

aloof from Syrian affairs in the last years of his life. This seems strange in view of his determined effort to avert Fātimid occupation of Aleppo in 995. Could the wait-and-see policy which Basil II followed in the last five years of his reign have been due to twenty years of experience with the Fātimids as a peaceful rival and the appreciation of al-Hākim's behavior, at least at the end of his life, as an aberration? Also, Basil may have realized the difficulties of ruling an inherently tribal society with a political order characterized by the equally quick swearing and retraction of oaths of political allegiance. Of course, this is only speculation.

Little is known of Byzantium's relations with the other tribal dynasties along the southeastern border between 1000 and 1025.

Mumahhid al-Dawla, the Marwānid amir, whom Basil II had made magister and dux of the East, presumably continued to recognize the sovereignty of Constantinople until he was murdered by two subordinates in late A.H. 400 or early 401 (which began August 15, 1010).⁵⁰ However, the population of Mayyāfāriqīn overthrew the two--Shirwa and Ibn Falyūs--in fear that they were preparing to hand the city over to the Byzantines.

The extreme anti-Byzantine sentiment shown in that riot at Mayyāfāriqīn is of interest because the same loathing of any prospect of Byzantine rule appeared in a revolt

which flared up in Aleppo against the Mirdāsids. The new rulers of Aleppo had tried to dismantle the city walls in an attempt to deprive the town of its strategic significance. This was probably due to the aversion of the desert warriors for siege warfare and their incapacity at it. The population, however, thought Ṣāliḥ, who had, of course, been identified with the Byzantines in the past, was about to hand the city over to them.⁵¹ This all goes to show that despite numerous alliances between their rulers and the Byzantine emperor, the people of north Syria and the Muslim-Arab borderlands remained demonstrably hostile to any extension of the Byzantine borders that would include them in the Christian oikoumene.

There is no evidence that Mumahhid al-Dawla's brother and successor, Naṣr al-Dawla (401-453/1011-1061), chose to receive or received any special preference from the Byzantine emperor. The only known contact between the Marwānid amir and the Byzantine emperor took place on 7 Dhū al-Hijja, 403/June 19, 1012 when a Byzantine ambassador along with representatives of the ^CAbbāsīd and Fāṭimid caliphs presented himself in Mayyāfāriqīn. As far as is known, the Byzantine ambassador was shown no favor which was not also extended to the other two envoys. It must be assumed that the new Marwānid amir, who was destined to become the most distinguished member of his dynasty, was inclined to follow a more independent course between the

three states which viewed the Diyār Bakr as an area of critical political importance.⁵²

By 1025 two dynasties from among the Banū Numayr had established themselves: the Banū Waththāb at Harran and Sarūj and the Banū Utayr at Edessa.⁵³ Nothing is known of Byzantine relations with these dynasties or with the tribe of Numayr in general during the reign of Basil II except for the limited police actions which took place against them in 1000-1001 and between 1005-1007. Byzantine relations with the ^CUqayl dynasty of Mosul are also totally unknown. The lack of information in the case of the ^CUqayl might reflect Byzantine disinterest in a remote and unimportant minor power. The same cannot be said for the Numayr. Their ability to irritate the local Byzantine officials is proven by the events of 1000-1001 and 1005-1007. It must be assumed that some sort of diplomatic relations were maintained between them and Byzantium and that the Byzantines sought recognition of the Emperor's sovereignty.

Generally, Byzantine policy toward the Fāṭimids and the other Arab and Muslim dynasties on the southeastern frontier, 1000-1025, was characterized by restraint and reliance on diplomacy. Basil II obviously desired no annexations of territory and none were made. Despite temporary setbacks, in particular the eight-year Fāṭimid occupation of Aleppo, the Byzantine southeastern frontier in 1025 was essentially the same as it had been in 1000.

Thus, Basil II's policy toward the Muslim states in this period, although there were no glorious conquests to match those in Bulgaria and Armenia, cannot be called anything but successful. The Emperor's goals were totally conservative and in this modest policy he was completely successful.

The Cession of Vaspurakan and Great Armenia

Basil II's actions toward the Caucasian states, 1000-1025, stands in marked contrast to his dealings with Byzantium's Muslim and Arab neighbors. In the Caucasian sphere the Byzantines met outright armed opposition from the Georgians and replied with force. There is no doubt that the Byzantines worked to penetrate the major Armenian kingdoms--the Bagratid kingdom of Great Armenia in the north and the Artsrunid kingdom of Vaspurakan in the south--and to build parties of Byzantine supporters in them. Were the Byzantines seeking to annex Armenia or only to dominate it in the same way they dominated the adjacent states on Byzantium's southeastern frontier? In other words, did Armenian annexation represent the success of a policy of territorial aggrandizement or the failure of a policy of indirect political domination?

After his triumphal march through Armenia and the annexation of the province of Upper Tao and the other lands of the Curopolates David, Basil II returned to

Constantinople by way of Theodosiopolis and Khaltoyarich, presumably in autumn, 1000. Probably in spring, 1001, but at any rate after the departure of the Byzantine emperor from Armenia, Gurgēn, the King of Iberia, invaded Tao and attacked Olti, the principal city of the province, and some other fortified places. In these efforts Gurgēn did not have much success, according to the Armenian chronicler Asolik.⁵⁴ In Asolik's opinion, Gurgēn was piqued that Basil II had conferred on him the rank of magister, a lower rank than that of curopalates, which the Emperor had given Gurgēn's son Bagrat III, the king of Abkhazia and heir to the kingdom of Iberia. The Georgian tradition claims that Basil II deliberately created the disparity between the ranks of father and son in order to foster friction between them.⁵⁵

Asolik says that Basil ordered the Kanikleios (Kanikl) to meet Gurgēn's army invading Tao. The statement of Yahyā b. Sa'īd that the governor of Antioch, Nicephoros Uranos, followed the Emperor's army with troops is a reference to this same campaign. What Yahyā fails to note is that an interval of about one year separated the journeys of Basil II and Nicephoros Uranos from Cilicia and Antioch respectively to Armenia.⁵⁶ At the time of his Baghdad embassy Nicephoros Uranos occupied the office of Kanikleios (ho epi tou kanikleiou).

Uranos found Gurgēn's army in the province of Basean where he pitched camp in Arm. E. 450/March 21, 1001-March 21,

1002. Since Uranos could not have set out from Antioch before the end of March at the earliest, he probably did not reach Basean before late June. For the rest of the year the Byzantine and Georgian armies sat opposite each other. When winter set in, Uranos, according to Asolik, informed Gurgén that Basil II was willing to grant whatever he asked and sought a settlement.

Unfortunately, Asolik does not say what were Gurgén's demands.⁵² It would not appear that they were so significant as to affect territorial boundaries. Possibly, some of the territories which formerly had belonged to David of Upper Tao were put conditionally under the administration of Gurgén.

When Gurgén of Iberia died in 1008, his son Bagrat became the first king of the united kingdom of Abkhazia and Iberia. With that the unification of Georgia which the Curopolates David had foreseen thirty-six years earlier when he adopted Bagrat III as his son was realized.

The Emperor Basil II took no action to abort the union of eastern and western Georgia in a single kingdom. In fact, the king, Bagrat III, also held the imperial rank of curopolates. Can it be said then, as some scholars have, that in annexing the territories of David, the former duke of Upper Tao, the Byzantine empire was opposing the unitary trend in Georgia?⁵⁸

Basil II also at some point granted Bagrat III the government of some of David's former territories, but only

for the duration of Bagrat III's life. This is evident from the message which Basil II sent after Bagrat's death to his successor Gēorgi I (1014-1027): "Give up everything that I have granted your father from the Curopalate's possessions, keep only your own patrimony."⁵⁹

The imperial command did not daunt the young Gēorgi, who replied that he refused to give up even a single house that had been subject to his father and then invaded Upper Tao. He defeated a Byzantine army near Olti. This burst of warfare was, perhaps, among the causes that led the Byzantines to refortify Theodosiopolis in 1018-1019.⁶⁰

It appears that the lands which Gēorgi I refused to relinquish, presumably on the pretext that his father had ruler them, included all or part of the districts of Artani, Javaxet^Ci, Kola, and Shavshet^Ci.⁶¹ Basil II may have offered these territories to Bagrat III at their meeting in 1000 at Havchich or they may have served as the quid pro quo with which Nicephoros Uranos induced the Iberian king Gurgen to withdraw from imperial territory in late 1001, in which case Bagrat III would have obtained them after Gurgen's death. However, this point cannot be established with certainty.⁶²

The end of the war in Bulgaria in 1018 made it possible for Basil II to turn his attention to the twenty-one year old king Gēorgi I, who, in the Byzantine viewpoint, was illegally occupying Byzantine territory.⁶³

In any case Gēorgi I acted more rashly and forcefully than his military strength justified. Disregarding the changed political situation, he refused to make his submission to the Emperor as Basil II commanded him.⁶⁴

Information which Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd presents helps to explain Gēorgi's boldness. The Georgian king originally tried to make an alliance with the Fāṭimid caliph al-Hākīm, whose relations with Byzantium at the end of his reign were strained near to the breaking point, as mentioned earlier. Whether al-Hākīm ever actually committed himself to cooperation with Gēorgi Yahyā does not say. However, Yahyā does seem to hint that he did.⁶⁵ Gēorgi's plan collapsed with al-Hākīm's mysterious disappearance, February 13, 1021.

Basil II chose first to meet the impending attack of al-Hākīm on Aleppo. When al-Hākīm's death removed that crisis, Basil II appears to have changed his route of march at once and set out for Georgia. We probably followed the same route which he had taken from Cilicia to Armenia twenty-one years earlier. Ibn al-^CAdīm says that Basil II passed by way of Manzikert, which was still in the hands of the Georgians.⁶⁸

At some time after May 7, 1021, the Byzantine army arriving in the province of Basean confronted Gēorgi's forces. Basil II was completely informed of Gēorgi's intention to force a two-front war in Syria and Caucasia on the Byzantine empire and was greatly incensed against

the Georgian king. The Emperor called on Gēorgi to make his submission, but his advisers reputedly warned him that once in the imperial presence he would either be murdered or imprisoned and, in any case, would be deprived of his kingdom. Aristakes Lastiverts'i, who is the source of this information, says that to the contrary Basil II was eager for a peaceful solution in order that the country should escape destruction.⁶⁷ After all, the two armies were facing each other in what was Byzantine territory.

Having passively confronted the Georgian army in Basean for a prolonged period, Basil II ordered the region surrounding Okomi (modern Ugumi) to the east of Theodosiopolis devastated. Prisoners were deported to the Byzantine theme of Chaldia. The Emperor began marching east toward the Armenian kingdom of Kars (Vanand).

Gēorgi I began to retreat back toward Georgia after burning Olti, the former capital of Upper Tao, in retaliation. He apparently had realized that there was no chance of inflicting a defeat upon Basil II with the forces at his disposal while on Byzantine soil.

The Byzantine army followed after Gēorgi as he retreated north into Kola, Artani, and then Javaxet^Ci. At Lake Palakac^Cis (modern Çildir göl) on the border of Armenian Vanand and Georgian Javaxet^Ci an inconclusive battle took place. The Georgian tradition places a battle--possibly the same one is meant--at Shirimni (Shirimk^C) in

southern Vanand.⁶⁸ Despite the alleged carnage, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd neglects to mention this or any other battle. He says that the King of Abkhazia fled from Basean without fighting and that the Emperor followed him until Gēorgi fortified himself beyond a river which the Byzantines could not cross.⁶⁹

According to Aristakes Lastiverts'i, Gēorgi I and his army took refuge in some fortified strongpoints in Abkhazia. In that case, Yahyā would have had the river Kura in mind.⁷⁰ However, the Georgian tradition says that Gēorgi I made his stand in the region of T^Cria^Cleti, northeast of Javaxet^Ci. This appears to be the more reliable information since Sumbat, the author of the History of the Bagratids, was closest to both Gēorgi I and the events described. Therefore, Yahyā must have been speaking of the K^Cc^Cia river, running to the south and parallel to the T^Cria^Cleti range and the Kura river, which it eventually joins.

Unable to cross the river separating his army from the Georgians, the Emperor Basil II ravaged the lands of Georgia and Armenia in a manner reminiscent of his wars in Bulgaria or Nicephoros Phocas' Syrian campaigns. Gēorgi's estates were burned. Of the prisoners taken, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd says that 200,000 (!) of those lucky enough to survive were blinded.⁷¹ Granted that the number Yahyā gives is exaggerated, these were still atrocities at least on the scale of

those committed in Bulgaria and possibly far worse. Aristakes Lastiverts'i says that the Byzantine army at the Emperor's command ravaged twelve cantons, sparing neither man, woman, nor child.⁷² Only the onset of winter forced Basil II to break off the destruction of Caucasia and to withdraw his army to Trebizond in the Chaldian theme. Although Basil II intended to recommence campaigning in the spring, he was amenable to receiving embassies and offers of peace during the winter.⁷³

Yahyā b. Sa^cīd states that Gēorgi I offered to return the fortresses and all the lands that had belonged to the Curopolates David and to acknowledge himself as a dependent and client of the Emperor. Gēorgi's son Bagrat would serve as a hostage for the fulfillment of his promises. Basil II accepted the Georgian king's offer, and a number of Byzantine civil and judicial officials accompanied the Georgian messenger on his trip back to Georgia. There they received the most binding oaths concerning the execution of the agreement from Gēorgi I, the Katholikos and bishops of the church, and other leading figures of the Georgian state.⁷⁴ Thus, according to Yahyā, the war between Basil II and Gēorgi I was as much as ended during the winter of 1021-1022. No other source, however, confirms Yahyā's information.⁷⁵

The winter of 1021-1022 was also a turning point in the history of Armenia. During that winter John-Smbat I,

the Bagratid King of Great Armenia (1016/1020-1040), agreed to bequeath his kingdom to the Byzantine emperor and Senacherim, the Arsrunid King of Vaspurakan (1003-1021), actually handed over the territories he ruled and accepted lands offered him within the borders of Byzantium in exchange. Neither of these concessions seems to have had as much effect on the Byzantine-Georgian conflict as did an internal Byzantine affair. That was the rebellion of Nicephoros "with the twisted neck" Phocas and Nicephoros Xiphias.

Each of the leaders in the rebellion wanted to make himself emperor, according to Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd, but eventually Xiphias became aware that the popular support Phocas enjoyed as the son of Bardas Phocas and the reputation of his famous family made his own dreams hopeless. Xiphias then successfully undertook to murder Phocas but that, instead of leaving him alone at the head of the rebellion, resulted in the dissolution of the rebel army. The Byzantine chronicler Skylitzes professes to believe that Xiphias murdered Phocas because of the machinations of Basil II to turn the two rebels against each other.⁷⁶

The rebellion of Phocas and Xiphias lasted only a year and bore no resemblance to the great rebellions of 976-979 and 987-989. In the words of Aristakes Lastiverts'i, "Their undertaking was of short duration, like children's play, and was like a building on sand which collapses under the pressure [of water]."⁷⁷

Armenians and Georgians from outside the Byzantine empire took little part in this rebellion, it appears, although the Armenian historians claim that it was King Senacherim of Vaspurakan or his son David who murdered Nicephoros "with the twisted neck."⁷⁸ That claim does not appear to have any basis in fact.

Once the danger was removed in the rear Basil II again turned his attention to Georgia. The first victim of the Emperor's wrath was a certain P^Cers. He was the commander of the fortress at Khaltoyarich, one of those originally ceded to the Curopolates David for the duration of his lifetime. At the time of David's death it was to have reverted to Byzantine control but apparently never actually did. P^Cers must have been to some extent under Byzantine military authority in the twenty-one years between David's death and the rebellion of Phocas and Xiphias and King Gēorgi, to whom he offered all the territory around Khaltoyarich or--it is not clearly stated--between the Kingdom of Abkhazia and Khaltoyarich. Basil ordered P^Cers beheaded in front of the fortress for having forgotten that it was a gift to David only for his lifetime.⁷⁹

The influence of P^Cers with Gēorgi I on behalf of the Byzantine rebels and the rumor, which Skylitzes mentions, that the rebels negotiated with Gēorgi concerning an alliance against Basil II appear to indicate that the rebels induced Gēorgi to withdraw from the peace agreement which,

according to Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd, he had already reached with Basil II but had not as yet fulfilled. Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd, of course, is the only witness to the conclusion of such an agreement at that time.⁸⁰

After Basil II departed from the fortress of Mazdat (Mastaton) which was located south of the Araxes in Basean, where he had weathered the rebellion, he passed more than a month at Salk^Cora farther down the Araxes in the eastern part of the province.⁸¹ During this time Basil II sent messengers to Gēorgi I, calling on him to return three fortresses and the surrounding cultivated areas. All three had been part of the apanage of David and thus were the Emperor's property.⁸² Unsuccessful in this approach, the Emperor fell back on force of arms to impose his will, but when he reached the locality, as yet unidentified, of Shl^Cpa, an ambassador from Gēorgi brought word to Basil II that the Georgian king now desired peace. This was only a ruse which it was hoped would render the imperial forces vulnerable to a surprise attack. Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd states that Basil II was aware of the impending attack. His statement explains how the Byzantines managed to weather the Georgian onslaught and win a decisive victory, September 11, 1022, or slightly thereafter. That Byzantine victory ended Georgian resistance.⁸³ Aristakes Lastiverts'i says the Georgians ran to attack the Byzantines "not according to the rules of military science, but as if they were rushing

for booty."⁸⁴ Sumbat, the historian of the Georgian Bagratids, exonerates Gēorgi who, he says, wanted peace. Instead he blames the surprise attack on "perfidious people on that and this side [who] did not allow Gēorgi to conclude peace."⁸⁵ Unfortunately, Sumbat offers no details to support his statement.

The charity which Basil II showed the defeated King of Georgia was surprising under the circumstances. According to Aristakes, the Emperor notified Gēorgi: "Do not believe that, having defeated you, I will demand from you more than before. Return the patrimony which the Curopalate bequeathed to me and give me your son as a hostage, and the peace will reign between us."⁸⁶

Elsewhere Aristakes says that Basil II had earlier sought from Gēorgi only three fortresses with their surrounding agricultural areas. However, according to the Georgian Royal Annals, King Gēorgi was called on to relinquish fourteen fortresses in Javaxet^Ci, Shavshet^Ci, Artani, and Kola. This was in addition to other fortresses already surrendered by the aznaurs. King Gēorgi was expected to recognize Byzantine ownership of those. The Georgian Bagratid historian Sumbat says that the surrender of twenty fortresses was involved, "as much from the first cession as from the second."⁸⁷ The first cession, it seems certain, was that agreed to by the Curopalates David, but

what was the second? Did the second cession take place at Bagrat III's meeting with Basil II in 1000 or was it made by arrangement in 1022?

The text of Aristakes Lastiverts'i seems to imply that Bagrat III made the second cession. However, it is improbable that in 1000 Basil II saw any profit to be gained by extorting more concessions from Bagrat III. Rather it was in the Emperor's interest to obtain Bagrat's acquiescence to the terms of the Curopolates David's will.

Actually, despite Aristakes' information, Basil may have demanded further territorial concessions, although of no great significance, from Gēorgi I in 1022. There is no indication that these were from the domain of the Curopolates, as Ernst Honigmann points out; David probably had no holdings in those provinces.⁸⁸

The statements of the chroniclers are simply too indefinite and contradictory to permit any certainty as to exactly which territories were annexed to Byzantium in 1022, but it appears that the Byzantine gains included reclamation of the Curopolates' complete bequest as well as some further minor territorial concessions.

For an imposed settlement this was not uncharitable. Gēorgi I was allowed to retain ownership over some churches, villages, and other localities. He also agreed to give hostages, including his own son, the future Bagrat IV (1027-1072), who were to remain at the Byzantine court for three years.⁸⁹

The Emperor did not return directly to Constantinople. Instead he marched southeast toward Vaspurakan. Senacherim, the King of Vaspurakan, had agreed to surrender his kingdom to the Emperor, and it then fell to Basil II to put an end to the raids which afflicted Vaspurakan. These emanated from Azarbayjan, in particular from the plain of Her (Khuy) north of Lake Urmiyya.⁹⁰

The actual act of cession took place during the winter of 1021-1022. Aristakes Lastiverts'i and Yahyā b. Sa^cīd interject it between the accounts of Basil II's two campaigns in Georgia and make it roughly contemporaneous with the rebellion of Phocas and Xiphias.⁹¹ The twelfth-century continuator of Thomas Artsruni's history of the house of Artsruni gives the date as Arm. E. 470/March 16, 1021-March 16, 1022.⁹⁷ Skylitzes dates the cession of Vaspurakan in 1016, but as his knowledge of chronology and the general course of events in the eastern provinces is frequently faulty, his statement is best ignored.⁹³

Numerous medieval authors identify the cause of Senacherim's decision to cede his kingdom as incursions from the east by invaders alternatively identified as Persians, Turks, Hagarenes, and Elamites. In view of these reports there is no doubt that significant pressure was placed on Vaspurakan from the east. Already in 1000, as mentioned earlier, King Senacherim had enlisted the

diplomatic support of Basil II to put an end to raids by the Rawwādid or Marwānid dynasties on his patrimony.⁹⁴ The Emperor's intervention was supposedly successful in restoring some measure of peace to the southeast corner of Lake Van at that time. However, the twelfth-century Armenian chronologist Samuel of Ani remarks that the Saracen invasions on Vaspurakan continued for twenty-two years.⁹⁵ The cession of the kingdom in 1022 ended that troubled time. Thus, it can be wondered whether Basil's intervention had the success which Asolik attributed to it.

The diversity of the chroniclers' information has obscured the true identity of the invaders of Vaspurakan. In particular, it is worthy of note that much has been made of the indications that the invaders were Turkish. From these it has been concluded that these were the first Turkish attacks on Armenia.⁹⁶

To the contrary, the Armenian chroniclers who describe these raids as Turkish, being twelfth and thirteenth century writers, may have been guilty of advancing the date of the first Turkish attacks on Armenia by at least a decade.⁹⁷ This is best seen from a glance at the most reliable, contemporary Armenian source. Although the principal theme of Aristakes Lastiverts'i's chronicle, which he wrote about 1080, is the misfortune the Turkish onslaught inflicted on Armenia, he does not connect the attacks which drove King Senacherim from Vaspurakan specifically with the

Turks. Instead he uses the neutral word "Persian," signifying only that the attackers came from the east.⁹⁸ This is the same appellation which Asolik, incidentally, one of Aristakes' sources, used in reference to the Rawwādids of Azarbayjan.⁹⁹ If, in reality, it was Turks who forced Senacherim to evacuate Vaspurakan, they achieved what two decades of pressure from Azarbayjan (according to Samuel of Ani) had failed to accomplish. Moreover, they are supposed to have done this in only two attacks, five years apart. This is not likely.

The ultimate destination of the Byzantine army which Basil II led through Vaspurakan was Her (Khūy) north of Lake Urmiyya. The Emperor forced the local Muslim ruler to agree to recognize Byzantine sovereignty and to pay tribute.¹⁰⁰ It was probably to be made in annual payments.

Obviously, the raiders who ravaged Vaspurakan originated from the region of Her where their leader had his capital. It is impossible to say whether the Rawwādīd dynasty was responsible for the raids or even was in possession of Her, since the history of Azarbayjan in this period is almost a blank.⁹⁹

Frequently, the alleged Byzantine grand plan, the ultimate goal of which was the absorption of Vaspurakan and all Armenia into the Empire, is cited as a factor of equal importance along with the incursions from the east in bringing about the ultimate extinction of the kingdom of

Vaspurakan's independence.¹⁰⁰ This assertion, however, is open to question.

Although anti-Chalcedonian sentiment is one of the most characteristic features of Armenian historiography, strangely enough, not one of the five Armenian chronographers who mention the raids that led Senacherim to cede Vaspurakan so much as alludes to Byzantine pressure as one of the causes of the cession.¹⁰³

The geographic position of Vaspurakan supposedly offered strategic advantages that made it a desirable addition to Byzantine territory as well as a gateway to the Bagratid kingdom of Ani.¹⁰⁴ To the contrary, it can be argued that the occupation by Byzantium of Vaspurakan would raise more strategic problems than it would solve. Being relatively flat and spacious, the province was easily penetrable. To defend it adequately would demand large numbers of troops.

More importantly, there is absolutely no evidence that the Byzantines considered Vaspurakan potentially valuable strategically or even in this period plotted territorial acquisitions on the eastern frontier according to the strategic benefit to be realized.¹⁰⁵ A Byzantine protectorate over Vaspurakan offered the same defensive advantages to Byzantium with much less cost and responsibility. The understanding Basil II reached with Senacherim in 1000 at Havchich when the latter accepted Byzantine suzerainty had the effect of making Vaspurakan a Byzantine protectorate.

At the same time Basil II was satisfied to allow the continued existence of Aleppo and the Marwānid territories in Diyār Bakr and the Lake Van area as Byzantine protectorates without ever attempting annexation. The city of Amīda was for all practical purposes an independent city during the second half of Basil II's reign. Although Amīda's strategic importance matched that of Antioch and Theodosiopolis, the Emperor never decided to annex it despite its isolation and helplessness.

King Senacherim surrendered seventy-two fortresses and 4,000 villages, according to Samuel of Ani.¹⁰⁶ Yahyā b. Sa^cīd estimates the number of fortresses more conservatively, and probably more reliably, at forty.¹⁰⁷ These divergent figures permit no certainty as to what actually was the extent of Senacherim's lands and those of his relative Derenik, who ceded his fief simultaneously. As a condition of the agreement of accession, the 105 monasteries of Vaspurakan were excluded from the cession and these remained in Armenian hands.¹⁰⁸ Vaspurakan was incorporated into the Byzantine empire as a separate katepanate.¹⁰⁹

King Senacherim emigrated with 14,000 followers and their families. His new lands included extensive holdings in Cappadocia, among them the town of Sebastea (Sivas) and the as yet unidentified localities of Larissa and Abara. Until his death in 1026 Senacherim held the imperial office

of strategos and the rank of magister. His former subjects continued to regard him as their king.¹¹⁰

As the position of king in Armenian society was merely that of the leading prince among the nobility (primus inter pares),¹¹¹ it follows that the nobility of Vaspurakan must have had the opportunity to veto the cession of the province. Instead, 14,000 of his subjects accompanied King Senacherim in the migration. Therefore, it appears that the decision to yield the kingdom did not merely represent the will of the king but was made in common.¹¹²

The Armenian language sources provide no evidence that would suggest that Byzantine pressure played a significant role in eliciting the decision to surrender Vaspurakan in exchange for lands with the Empire. A statement of the soldier-writer Kekaumenos in his "Counsels and Narrations" (Strategikon) strengthens this impression. In the section in which he addresses toparchs--independent but nevertheless client princes of the Empire who held lands on its periphery--Kekaumenos advises:

Witness the cautiousness of the Porphyrogenitos [Basil II] toward the foreigner although the Emperor was young then. I will tell you another [example], pious lord. Senacherim, who you know was the descendant of ancient kings, wished

(ethelēse) to give his land to the Emperor Basil the Porphyrogenitos so that he himself might

become his subject (doulos). [Basil II], having accepted gladly the generous [gift], honored him as magister and nothing more, although he was the descendant of ancient kings and himself a king.¹¹³

The undeniable implication of Kekaumenos' words is that Senacherim voluntarily surrendered his kingdom to the Byzantine Emperor. It would be pointless to cite Basil's treatment of Senacherim as an example if he had extracted the cession of Vaspurakan by force since the Emperor would have been free to act in any way he chose toward Senacherim in that case. Moreover, Kekaumenos would certainly have been aware of the forcible seizure of Vaspurakan. It must be remembered the Kekaumenos was of partially Ibero-Armenian background, and thus was presumably well-informed on recent Caucasian history; he also did not automatically identify with the Imperial viewpoint, as is seen throughout the text of the "Counsels and Narrations."

In sum, there is no evidence that the Byzantines employed armed force to seize Vaspurakan. While the assumption that Senacherim willingly surrendered Vaspurakan may seem naive, it should be borne in mind that almost nothing is known about the internal conditions of the Vaspurakan kingdom in this period, still less about the situation in Azarbayjan from which the raids on Vaspurakan originated, and absolutely nothing about what policy goals appeared most pressing to Basil II after the conclusion of the Bulgarian war. On the other hand, five Armenian sources plus Kekaumenos give the impression that King Senacherim without compulsion voluntarily surrendered the province of Vaspurakan.

In 1000 it would have appeared inconceivable that within half a century the Bagratid kingdom of Great Armenia or Ani would be incorporated into the Byzantine empire. In that year King Gagik I was so confident of his strength that he refused to tender his submission along with the rest of the Caucasian royalty to Basil II. As far as is known, he suffered no reprisals in consequence. The Bagratid kingdom flourished from the time Gagik I ascended its throne in 990 until his death between 1016 and 1020.¹¹⁴ His brilliant reign may even have seen the temporary reincorporation of Dvin, the longtime capital of one of the most powerful Arab amirates, into the Bagratid state.¹¹⁵

Gagik's two sons, John-Smbat and Ashot IV, succeeded him as co-kings. This immediately gave rise to the problem of how Gagik's kingdom was to be divided. King Georgi I of Georgia, whose mediation was invited gave Ani and the surrounding cantons (Shirak) to John-Smbat and the (northern and eastern) part of the kingdom, bordering Georgia and Muslim territory, to Ashot.¹¹⁶

Unfortunately, the chronology of the preceding events can be established only in the loosest fashion. At some point both Basil II and Senacherim of Vaspurakan sent troops to Ashot IV to help him restore his position. The aid from Senacherim must have been given prior to 1022 as he left Vaspurakan permanently in the year.¹¹⁷ What Aristakes Lastiverts'i says about Byzantine assistance to Ashot is more difficult to place chronologically. According to him:

Ashot was surrounded by powerful neighbors who took many lands from him so that, finally, no longer able to bear it, he left his country and went to the court of the Roman Emperor. He was received with favor. He requested the help of troops with which he might return to his country. The Lord granted him success and he recovered numerous cantons and fortresses; he became more powerful than all his predecessors with the result that many nobles gave their possessions to him and submitted to him voluntarily.¹¹⁸

Aristakes inserts the story of Ashot's trip to Constantinople between the account of King Geōrgi's mediation and the narrative of events which took place in Armenia in Arm. E. 467/1018-1019, 468/1019-1020, and 470/1021-1022 successively. If Aristakes is not confused, which is possible, it follows that Senacherim's aid to Ashot, Geōrgi's mediation between the two kings of Great Armenia, and the Byzantine aid to Ashot all took place as early as 1017 or 1018. The convincing suggestion of K. N. Iuzbashian that King Gagik I died in 1016 or 1017 and not in 1020, as was previously believed, makes this reconsideration of the chronology possible.¹¹⁹

Very significant is the coincidence that Ashot IV received aid from both Senacherim of Vaspurakan and Basil II. This suggests that some community of interest existed prior to 1021 between the King of Vaspurakan and the Byzantine Emperor which led both to support Ashot IV.

Probably, the Armenian dynasts of Great Armenia, eager to gain or regain greater independence once the firmhanded Gagik I had passed from the scene, became

restive upon the accession of his two young and inexperienced successors who split the possessions of the deceased king between them. The Shaddādids of Ganja, who were establishing themselves in the area of Dvin, were also a threat to Ashot.¹²⁰ Therefore, it is conceivable that prior to 1021-1022, Ashot found himself pressed between a coalition of dynasts supporting his brother John-Smbat and the Shaddādids of Ganja. It is difficult to divine who else might be meant by Aristakes' references to "powerful neighbors." Matthew of Edessa, however, pictures Ashot as offensively-minded and forcing John-Smbat back to the gates of Ani itself.¹²¹ Matthew fails to clearly indicate the time to which his statement applies. Whatever the reality of the brothers' relative positions, Byzantine aid permitted Ashot to reestablish himself prior to 1022. Later he must have become considerably more powerful. Matthew's information may apply to that period.

Basil II's support for Ashot IV definitely indicates that prior to 1021-1022 the Byzantine Emperor was willing to intervene in the affairs of Great Armenia, but it is not clear for what purpose and to how great a degree.¹²² King Senacherim may have supported Ashot IV as the strongest potential ally against the hostile Muslims to the east.

During the winter of 1022 John-Smbat's representative, the Armenia patriarch Peter Getadarj, visited the

Emperor Basil's winter camp at Trebizond. There he took part in the celebration of Epiphany on January 6, 1022. The Patriarch reputedly found great favor with Basil II. Nevertheless, before leaving Trebizond the Patriarch handed over a document containing a pledge on the part of King John-Smbat that after his death the Bagratid Kingdom of Great Armenia should become the possession of the Byzantine Emperor. The only explanatory comment which the narrator of this episode, Aristakes Lastiverts'i, offers is that John-Smbat's son had died prematurely and that the King had no other offspring.¹²³

According to the Byzantine chronographer Skylitzes, John-Smbat had allied with Gēorgi I of Iberia in his war against Basil II. When Gēorgi fled deep into Georgia, Skylitzes states that John-Smbat became frightened and of his own will surrendered the keys of Ani to the Emperor. Basil II commissioned him magister and ruler of Great Armenia and Ani for life.¹²⁴

John-Smbat's friendship with Gēorgi I may have been in counterpoise to Basil II's patronage of Ashot IV, who had apparently accepted Byzantine cliency in order to restore his position in Great Armenia. The support of Senacherim, who, as far as is known, always enjoyed friendly relations with Basil II, would have then rounded out the bloc. This would have conformed to Basil's policy elsewhere of depending on clients to insure the security of the Empire's borders.

The exact nature of the relation between the cession of the Kingdom of Vaspurakan and that of the Kingdom of Great Armenia (or Ani) is obscure. If it could be determined which cession preceded the other, this might contribute to a better understanding of the causation. Unfortunately, not even the relative chronology is known. In any case, Basil II was satisfied to extract only the promise of cession from King John-Smbat. After the occupation of Vaspurakan the Kingdom of Great Armenia (Ani) enjoyed another quarter century of independence before its eventual annexation by Constantine IX Monomachos in 1045-1046.

The final annexation of Armenian-inhabited territory that took place during the reign of Basil II was that of the Muslim-ruled city of Archēsh on the north shore of Lake Van. By the time of its annexation Byzantine territory surrounded the city and citadel. The annexation of Archēsh, which Constantine Porphyrogenitos had urged in 950-952, was then only an afterthought when it at last occurred in 1024.¹²⁵

Shortly before his death on December 12/15, 1025, Basil II allowed the Georgian prince Bagrat, the future Bagrat IV, who had passed three years in internment at Constantinople, to return to the court of his father Georgi I where he arrived after the Emperor's death.¹²⁶

Conclusion

The historical sources are much less full for events during the second half of the reign of Basil II than for those in the first half. This circumstance produces the impression that a durable stability prevailed in the eastern provinces of the Empire from 1000 to 1025. This, however, is probably a substantially accurate conclusion and not merely a reflection of the disinterest manifested by the chroniclers in the events of this era.

Basil II carried out a policy of conservatism and restraint toward the divided neighboring tribal dynasties of the Syro-Mesopotamian borderlands. Quarrels for local power, perhaps, distracted the rulers of these minor Muslim states from the traditional Byzantine enemy, who, in any case, was too formidable to be directly challenged. There is no evidence of any contact between Byzantium and the Būyids between 1000-1025.

Occasional periods of stress marked the otherwise friendly relations between Byzantium and the Fāṭimid Caliphate during the reign of al-Ḥākīm. Open hostilities at times threatened to break out but never actually did. The Fāṭimids evidently intended to push north and east toward Baghdad while avoiding entanglement in an actual conflict with Byzantium. In pursuing this goal they were temporarily successful, but the rebellion of the Fāṭimid wālī at Aleppo, ^CAzīz al-Dawla Fāṭik, which took place

probably in 1020 or 1021, left the Fāṭimids where they had been in 1000. Fāṭik's revolt, incidentally, was the only instance after the signature of the Byzantine-Fāṭimid treaty in which Basil II supported a rebel against the Fāṭimid caliph.

After the death of al-Ḥākim in 1021, Aleppo drifted back into the Fāṭimid orbit. It is as noteworthy as it is perplexing that Basil II made no effort to coerce Fāṭik to remain a loyal Byzantine vassal although in 995 a similar Fāṭimid threat to Aleppo's independence had prompted the Emperor to make his famous seventeen day forced march across Anatolia to relieve the beleaguered city. This change probably reflected a decreased concern with the Fāṭimids as a threat to the Byzantine state. Basil II's restraint at this time underlines the essential quiescence of the policy he enjoined upon his governors at Antioch. Shortly before Basil's death the rebellion of Ṣālih b. Mirdāṣ of the Kilāb tribe at Aleppo, which removed the city from Fāṭimid hegemony, demonstrated again the wisdom of his policy.

What effect did al-Ḥākim's unusual personality have on the Byzantine attitude toward the Fāṭimids? Did they excuse his actions as a temporary aberration or did they regard him in the same light as any other holder of the Caliphal office? Whatever the true situation--and this is not at all clear--al-Ḥākim's order to raze the Church of

the Holy Resurrection at Jerusalem and the other churches in the Fāṭimid caliphate as well as the pressures he put on Christians to convert to Islam did not incite the Byzantines to initiate hostilities although his vigorous anti-Christian actions may have contributed to Basil II's decision to prohibit trade and travel with the territories of the Fāṭimid caliphate.¹²⁷

The basic issue at conflict between the Fāṭimids and Byzantium was possession of Aleppo. To maintain the city's independence was the leitmotif of Byzantine policy in north Syria. This, for instance, was certainly the major reason behind the severing of trade and travel relations with the territories of the Fāṭimid Caliphate.

Basil II continued to protect the southeastern border of the Empire through the establishment of client relationships with the lesser Muslim dynasties. The classic example of this policy in action was at Aleppo where Lu'lu', his son Mansūr, Ṣāliḥ b. Mirdās, and ʿAzīz al-Dawla Fāṭik all accepted Byzantine cliency at one time or another. Mumahhid al-Dawla, the Marwānid amir (387-401/997-1011) accepted Byzantine cliency as did the anonymous Muslim ruler of Fer in Azarbayjan. Although these are the only documented examples of such client relations, it can be assumed that this was a normal feature of Byzantine eastern policy during the reign of Basil II.

While acceptance of Byzantine clientage gave minor dynasties such as the Hamdānids some security in maintaining

a measure of independence from Cairo or Baghdad, their Muslim subjects were violently hostile to any arrangement that exuded even a hint of eventual direct rule by Byzantium.

In the final analysis a combination of Fāṭimid military weakness, Byzantine restraint, and hostility among ordinary Muslims to the prospect of Byzantine rule combined to prevent an alteration of the status quo in the Byzantine-Muslim borderlands, 1000-1025.

Meanwhile, most of Armenia was being annexed to Byzantium. The newly-acquired Byzantine territories included the Kingdom of Vaspurakan and the Armenian territories which had formerly belonged to David of Upper Tao. Basil II also extracted a document of cession from the Bagratid king of Great Armenia that was subsequently invoked by Constantine IX Monomachos. Thus, between 1000 and 1025 a giant step was taken toward the liquidation of the independent Armenian states.

It is evident that if the incorporation of Armenia represented the success of a longstanding annexationist policy, that facet of Byzantine policy was completely at odds with that toward the Syro-Mesopotamian Muslim dynasties. Basil II preferred to control the latter through the establishment of client relationships rather than by instituting direct Byzantine rule.

In reality there was no Byzantine grand plan for the annexation of Armenia. The evidence reviewed in the

preceding chapter demonstrates that Byzantine policy toward Armenia in the period of the annexations was not actively expansionist. Both David of Upper Tao and the Bagratid king John-Smbat chose to seek personal forgiveness from Basil II by sacrificing the independence of their states after their own deaths. There is also some evidence that in both Upper Tao and Vaspurakan there was a substantial faction which favored unification with Byzantium among the nobility. Basil II certainly worked at forming pro-Byzantine parties in the Armenian states. His object in this, however, could as easily have been to obtain Armenian cooperation with Byzantine interests as to realize the ultimate annexation of the Armenian states. In no case was more than the mere threat of armed force necessary to bring about the cession of the state involved. In respect to the annexation of Vaspurakan, it is particularly obvious that the Byzantines did not use force to take possession of the province. Indeed, Byzantine relations with King Senacherim appear to have been cordial prior to winter, 1021-1022.

What Basil II sought was friendly governments in the states surrounding the Byzantine border. When he intervened in the Kingdom of Great Armenia to restore the position of the younger of King Gagik's two successors, Ashot IV certainly had to pledge subservience and clientage to obtain aid. Byzantine intervention could have been directed

against either the neighboring Muslims or Ashot IV's brother John-Smbat, who was probably less favorably disposed than he toward Byzantium.

The bulk of the Armenian population apparently did not feel the same grass-roots hostility as did the city populations in the Muslim border states at the prospect of direct Byzantine rule. No instances in which the population of the Armenian towns revolted to prevent the incorporation of Armenia into the Byzantine empire are known. Probably, Basil II's unusually favorable attitude toward the doctrinal and administrative independence of the Armenian Church was a significant factor in eliciting passive acceptance of Byzantine rule from the Armenian population.

After King Gurgen of Iberia's invasion of Upper Tao and Basean in 1001, peace with the Georgian states prevailed until the death in 1014 of Bagrat III, during whose reign all Georgia was united for the first time. In 1014 or soon thereafter Gēorgi I, the son of Bagrat III, initiated hostilities against Byzantium. These continued until 1022. King Gēorgi also collaborated with the Byzantines Phocas and Xiphias when they rebelled against the Emperor. Once relieved of the burden of the Bulgarian war, Basil II finally succeeded in imposing a peaceful attitude upon the Georgian king. This lasted until the death of the latter in 1027. Although the Georgian territories which the Byzantine Emperor annexed were not

comparable in extent to the Armenian annexations, even those minor acquisitions occasioned bitter Georgian resistance.

This in turn raises the question why the Byzantine Emperor carried out the annexation of two of the major states of Armenia and laid the foundation for the annexation of Georgia. The explanation appears to lie in the fact that the internal political and social trends within Georgia at this time were toward greater, not less, unity. The Kingdom of Georgia was far less susceptible than the Armenian states to fissiparous pressures and penetration from outside. Thus, annexation of Georgia could have been effected only by military means in a rugged and unencouraging topography.

In sum, there is no evidence that Basil II's Caucasian policy was aimed at the annexation of Georgia or opposed the unitary trend which led to the consolidation of the various territories of Georgia under the rule of one king.

CONCLUSION TO PART III

Byzantine eastern policy as it evolved between 1000 and 1025 was the outgrowth of two earlier stages. During the first stage, which lasted from 976 to 990, Basil II was involved in a battle for control of the Byzantine governmental apparatus. Only at the end of this stage as a result of his victory over the rebel Phocas in 989 did

Basil II become capable of directing his own eastern policy. This brought immediate changes. The first was that European goals thereafter took precedence over Asian ones. The Emperor's most cherished objective was the subjugation of Bulgaria. He discarded the expansionist policy in North Syria, which Nicephoros Phocas and John Tzimiskes had originally championed. Most ominously for the future of Armenia, this period closed with David of Upper Tao's bequest to the Byzantine Emperor of the territories he ruled in reparation for the aid he had given to the rebel Bardas Phocas.

Already between 975 and 990 the simultaneous existence of two Muslim caliphates, the ^CAbbāsīd and the Fāṭimid served to relieve the pressure against the Byzantine eastern frontier as Muslim energies were diverted to the intramural quarrel between Baghdad and Cairo. This took precedence over the anti-Byzantine frontier war on the level of interstate politics although probably not in the public consciousness.

In 983 the Fāṭimids became a Syrian power by firmly reannexing Damascus while ^CAdud al-Dawla, the greatest Būyid amir, died, leaving the dynasty without a strong chief who could unite the rest of the family under his leadership.

The result was a continuation of the fragmentation and division of political power in the Syro-Mesopotamian

borderlands, which had begun in the 980's. This condition became irreversible in the 990's. This process took place against a background of permanent Fātimid preoccupation with the conquest of Iraq. Both circumstances helped to solidify the Byzantine position in the East.

During the second stage, 990-1000, the main features of the eastern policy Basil II was to follow took shape. In this process the crucial year was 1000 when, with the death of David of Upper Tao, the occasion arrived for Basil II to make good on the cession promised in David's will. At roughly the same time the peace treaty with the Fātimids was concluded. It is difficult to overestimate the significance of either event for subsequent Byzantine policy in the East. The incorporation of Upper Tao and its dependencies marked the advent of Byzantium as a Caucasian power. The treaty with the Fātimids allowed the Byzantines to almost ignore North Syria for the rest of Basil II's reign.

From Abū al-Ma^Cālī's death in 992 until that of al-^CAzīz in 996 the Fātimids had campaigned tirelessly in North Syria. Al-^CAzīz's exit removed the specter of a major war between Byzantium and the Fātimid caliphate. The inconclusive clashes during the second half of the decade seem to have convinced Basil II that a stable peace with the Fātimids was the most prudent Byzantine policy. In his Syrian campaign in 999 Basil II was successful in his objective of forcing the Fātimids to sign a peace treaty.

Also in 1000 the Būyid senior amir Bahā' al-Dawla transferred the Būyid capital from Baghdad to Shīrāz, making the final and complete eclipse of Būyid influence in Iraq and Syria. The process of political fragmentation in Syria and Upper Mesopotamia meanwhile continued unabated.

Thus, by 1000 the goals that would characterize Basil II's eastern policy during the rest of his reign had emerged. They were, first, the precedence of the war in Bulgaria over all eastern matters; second, the neutralization of Fāṭimid pressure on North Syria and preservation of the status quo in Syria and Upper Mesopotamia; and, third, the establishment of friendly relations, including recognition of the Emperor's sovereignty, with the lesser states surrounding Byzantium's eastern border from Hamdānid Aleppo to Abkhazia and Iberia.

Obviously, the realization of the first tenet of Basil II's policy--the subjugation of Bulgaria--depended at least to some degree on the successful implementation of the second and third tenets--maintenance of peace with the Empire's Muslim neighbors and the establishment of friendly relations based on clientage with as many of the surrounding minor dynasties, whether Christian or Muslim, as possible.

In Armenia it proved impossible to maintain mutually beneficial relations with the rulers of the major Armenian states because of a combination of internal and external

factors. These included the independence of the feudal nobility toward their rulers, the political division of the Armenian kingdoms, the small degree of political centralization in the individual states, the continual danger of Muslim raids from Azarbayjan, and apathy on the part of the great nonaristocratic majority of the Armenian population to the danger of a Byzantine takeover. The incorporation of the Armenian states into Byzantium rather than representing the successful conclusion to an aggressive Imperial policy of territorial aggrandizement was a consequence of the Byzantine failure to dominate the Armenian kingdoms indirectly. Although its attitude toward Armenia was not primarily expansionist, Byzantium was obviously not hostile--nor by virtue of its universalist ideology could it be--to opportunities for peaceful expansion. In Caucasia, as elsewhere, the wholly understandable desire for friendly and, if possible, dependent neighbors dominated Byzantine policy. Where this proved an unrealistic goal, annexation became the most acceptable alternative.

Footnotes

¹S. Zakkar, The Emirate of Aleppo, 1004-1094 (Beirut, 1971), 38-41.

²Yahyā, CSCO, 240.

³Al-Maqrīzī, Itti'āz, II, 39-40; Ibn Taghrībirdī, al-Nujūm al-Zāhira, IV, 192; Evidently the same text is to be found in the anonymous Kitāb al-Dhakhā'ir wa-l-Tuhaf, ed. Salāh al-Dīn al-Munajjid (Kuwait, the Arab Heritage, 1959). It was not available to me, but a translation appears in M. Hamidullah, "Nouveaux documents sur les rapports de l'Europe avec l'Orient Musulman au Moyen Age", Arabica, 7 (1960), 297.

⁴Al-Maqrīzī, Itti'āz, II, 99, 101, 107, 108.

⁵Yahyā, CSCO, 214.

⁶Skylitzes, Synopsis, 345, refers to these Arabs as Noumeritoi and Ataphitōi. N. Adontz, "Samuel l'Arménien, roi des Bulgares", Académie Royale de Belgique, Mémoires, Classe des Lettres, 39 (1938), 24, identified the Ataphitōi with the Banū al-Waththāb. The close relationship which existed between the Banū Waththāb and Banū Numayr makes Adontz's identification of the former tribe with the Ataphitōi almost certainly correct. Skylitzes' statement, it appears, is the earliest known reference to their presence in the Harrān-Sarūj area of Syria. cf. v. Oppenheim, Die Beduinen, I, 226. Adontz's hypothesis that Uranos' campaign against the Numayr and Waththāb took place in 1004-1007 is purely conjectural, arising from Adontz's conviction of the deficiency in Skylitzes' chronology. His connection of the name Kitrinitēs with the town of Qinnasrīn is also unlikely. J. Darrouzès, Epistoliers Byzantins du Xe Siècle (Paris, 1960), followed by V. Laurent, "La chronologie des gouverneurs d'Antioche", 235, wrongly puts Uranos' campaign in Armenia in spring of 1000 and his return a year later. Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 44: 166, says that Uranos camped in Basean only in Arm. E. 450/March 21, 1001-March 20, 1002. Thus,

the campaign against the Numayr and Waththāb took place, at least if Skylitzes' often shaky chronology is accurate in this case, in the fall of 1000.

⁷Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, 192; Zakkar, Emirate of Aleppo, 43-44.

⁸Yahyā, CSCO, 210; Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, 195.

⁹Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, 195; Canard, Dynastie des H'amdanides, 709.

¹⁰Yahyā, PO, 258/466; Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 340, #292-296; Yāqūt, Mu^Cjam al-Buldān, I, 386.

¹¹Yahyā, PO, 268/466; Yāqūt, Mu^Cjam al-Buldān, IV, 290.

¹²Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 341, #300; Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, IX, 312; see v. Oppenheim, Die Beduinen, I, 226, on the Banū Waththāb.

¹³Yahyā, PO, 259/467; Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, 196.

¹⁴Yahyā, CSCO, 210, for the date of Lu'lu''s death. Zakkar, Emirate of Aleppo, 44, follows the date given by Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, 197. However, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd, as a well-located contemporary, is certainly a superior source to Ibn al-^CAdīm, who is prone to confusion caused by the divergent data of his sources for this period. The advantage to accepting Muharram, 399, for Lu'lu''s death, the date Yahyā gives, is that it serves to explain why Ṣālih b. Mirdās chose the time he did to attack Raḥba.

¹⁵Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, IX, 210-211; al-Maqrīzī, Itti^Cāz, II, 80.

¹⁶Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, 197.

¹⁷Yahyā, CSCO, 210. Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, 197, for the description of Mansūr's character. For other citations see Canard, Dynastie des H'amdanides, 710.

- ¹⁸Yahyā, CSCO, 210.
- ¹⁹Ibid., 210; Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, 199.
- ²⁰Yahyā, CSCO, 210-211; Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, 198-199; Zakkar, Emirate of Aleppo, 44-47.
- ²¹Yahyā, CSCO, 211.
- ²²Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, 200; Zakkar, Emirate of Aleppo, 48.
- ²³Yahyā, CSCO, 211; Zakkar, Emirate of Aleppo, 49-50.
- ²⁴Yahyā, CSCO, 211, Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, 201.
- ²⁵Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, 300; Zakkar, Emirate of Aleppo, 48, wrongly states that Mansūr b. Lu'lu' was the first ruler of Aleppo to give the khutba to the Fāṭimid caliph. See chapter 7, fn. 62.
- ²⁶Yahyā, CSCO, 212.
- ²⁷Ibid., 213; Zakkar, Emirate, 55, thinks that Basil II responded to Sālīh's urgings because of his desire to avoid entanglement in a clash with the Kilāb and Numayr. Zakkar is probably guilty of underrating the value of the incipient alliance with Sālīh for the Byzantines.
- ²⁸Yahyā, CSCO, 214.
- ²⁹Yahyā, CSCO, 214; Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, 213, says Fath delivered to Sālīh the lands which Mansūr had previously promised to Sālīh. Zakkar, Emirate of Aleppo, 57, adopts Ibn al-^CAdīm's version.
- ³⁰Yahyā, CSCO, 214. M. Canard, "La Destruction de l'Eglise de la Résurrection par le Calife Hākim et l'histoire de la descente du feu sacré", B, 35 (1955), 42, claims that al-Hākim's prejudicial measures against

Christians were the cause of Basil II's edict prohibiting trade with Egypt and Syria. Rozen, Imperator Vasilij, 359, #348, also suggested this motive. However, Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd mentions Basil II's edict in the midst of his discussion of the Fāṭimid penetration of Aleppo. This indicates rather pointedly that Yahyā himself linked the issuing of Basil's edict to the Fāṭimid machinations to gain control of Aleppo. Yahyā makes no remark that would connect Basil's action to al-Hākim's mistreatment of the Christian minority in Egypt or his destruction of the Church of the Resurrection. For a discussion of this question, see Chapter 6 of this thesis.

³¹Zakkar, Emirate of Aleppo, 53-54.

³²Yahyā, CSCO, 214-215. On Shaykh Laylūn see Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, 210 and fn. 4; Yāqūt, Mu^Cjam al-Buldān, IV, 374.

³³Yahyā, CSCO, 215.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 215; Ibn al-^CAdīm ignores these hostilities.

³⁵*Ibid.*, 215.

³⁶*Ibid.*, 215.

³⁷*Ibid.*, 215-216.

³⁸Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, 218, Zakkar, Emirate of Aleppo, 56.

³⁹Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, 218.

⁴⁰Yahyā, CSCO, 226-227; Ibn al-Qalānisi, Dhayl Ta'rikh Dimashq, 69-70.

⁴¹Yanyā, CSCO, 216.

⁴²According to Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, 218-219, Fātik obtained aid from Basil II by offering to surrender Aleppo to the Byzantines. When the Emperor was at Marj Dābiq,

within thirty miles of Aleppo, Fātik sent word to him to turn back since the death of al-Hākīm had removed the threat to the city. Allegedly Fātik warned Basil II that he and the Kilāb would resist a Byzantine effort to seize Aleppo. The Emperor then turned northeast toward Manzikert. This version, which Yahyā b. Sa^cīd ignores, does not take into consideration Basil II's lifelong disinterest in annexing Aleppo and the specter of hostilities on Byzantium's Georgian frontier.

⁴³Yahyā, CSCO, 239; Ibn al-^cAdīm, Zubda, 219-223; al-Maqrīzī, Itti^cāz, II, 129-130; Zakkar, Emirate of Aleppo, 61-65.

⁴⁴Yahyā, CSCO, 243-244; according to Yahyā, Sitt al-Mulk phrased her request for a resumption of Byzantine-Fātimid diplomatic relations on the basis of the improvement of conditions for Christians in the Fātimid caliphate. This does not demonstrate that the reason for the initial severing of relations was of a religious character. After all, Sitt al-Mulk could hardly have made reference to the situation in Aleppo as the Fātimids were determined to retain the city. See above, fn. 30. Later, Romanos III Argyros rejected a treaty proposed by the Fātimid caliph al-Zāhir on account of the Aleppan issue: Yahyā, CSCO, 271.

⁴⁵Al-Musabbihī in Becker, Beiträge, 80; al-Maqrīzī, Itti^cāz, II, 174.

⁴⁶Yahyā, CSCO, 228, 244. He refers to the Fātimid commander who surrendered Hisn al-Khawābī and Maraḡiyya as Muḥammad b. Khālīd al-Nahrānī in the first place and as Muḥammad b. ^cAlī b. Hāmīd in the other.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 245.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 246-247.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, 247-248.

⁵⁰Ibn al-Azraq, Ta'rīkh al-Fāriqī, 88-89.

⁵¹Ibn al-Azraq, Ta'riḫ al-Fāriqī, 96-97; al-Musabbihī in Becker, Beiträge, 80, al-Maqrīzī, Ittiḥāz, II, 171, Zakkar, Emirate of Aleppo, 93-94.

⁵²Ibn al-Azraq, Ta'riḫ al-Fāriqī, 109-110.

⁵³v. Oppenheim, Die Beduinen, I, 226.

⁵⁴Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 44: 166-167.

⁵⁵Histoire de la Géorgie, I, 297; Sumbat, Zhizn' i Izvestie o Bagratidakh, 156-159; Brosset, Histoire de la Géorgie, Additions et Eclaircissements, 186, attempts to explain Basil II's actions in giving the son Bagrat the higher title. According to Brosset, Basil foresaw that the succession to Upper Tao would be contested. By giving Bagrat the higher rank of curopalates, Basil made an ally out of an enemy and divided the son from his father in case the latter should wish to resist the Byzantine annexation. Brosset's otherwise not implausible explanation fails, however, to explain why the Georgian kings came to meet Basil in the first place if they were originally disposed to oppose the annexation of Upper Tao and its dependencies.

⁵⁶Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 44: 166-167; Yahyā, PO, 252/460.

⁵⁷Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 44: 166.

⁵⁸Z. Avalichvili, "La succession du Curopalate David", B, 183-184; Grousset, Histoire de l'Arménie, 529-530.

⁵⁹Aristakes, Récit des Malheurs, 7.

⁶⁰Aristakes, Récit, 7, 8, 11. Gēorgi's rejection of Basil's demand certainly rested on a legal claim. This was that the lands had belonged to his father, Bagrat III, not that Basil in taking possession of David's patrimony as his inheritance had acted illegally. Iuzbashian, "K khronologii pravleniia Gagika I Bagratuni", Antichnaia drevnost i srednie veka, 10 (1973), 196, connects the refortification of Theodosiopolis with the death of the Bagratid king of Ani Gagik I, which he dates prior to 1018. Gēorgi I's invasion of Byzantine Iberia offered an equally plausible reason for the refortification of Theodosiopolis. It is

possible, however, that the refortification of Theodosiopolis had nothing to do with current political events but was part of a general policy pursued by Basil II of strengthening the eastern system of fortifications. The refortification of Antioch in 1016 or thereafter, mentioned by Yahyā b. Saʿīd, CSCO, 215, would also have been occasioned by this policy.

⁶¹Honigmann, Die Ostgrenze, 161, 165. The question of the status of Artani, Javaxet^Ci, Kola, and Shavshet^Ci at the time of David's death is a very obscure one. Honigmann thinks that these territories may not have belonged to the Curopolates David. At any rate, according to him, they did not become part of Byzantine Iberia in 1000. The Georgian Royal Annals (Histoire de la Géorgie, I, 309) refer to David's possessions in Tao, Basian, Artani, Kola, Javaxet^Ci, and Shavshet^Ci. How extensive were these possessions? Did they embrace the entire provinces? We do not know. C. Toumanoff, "The Bagratids of Iberia from the Eighth to the Eleventh Century", Le Muséon, 74 (1961) 313, fn. 269, thinks one can assume that these provinces belonged to David.

⁶²Honigmann, Die Ostgrenze, 162, suggests that Gēorgi occupied them while Basil II was involved in the Bulgarian war.

⁶³A. Akulian, Einverleibung Armenischer Territorien durch Byzanz im XI Jahrhundert (Zurich, 1912), 21-22, asserts that as the logical continuation of Basil II's plans, the Emperor would inevitably turn on Syria and Armenia once Bulgaria was annexed. However, it must be admitted, Gēorgi's actions pointlessly provoked Basil II.

⁶⁴Aristakes, Récit, 25; Yahyā, CSCO, 239.

⁶⁵Yahyā, CSCO, 239.

⁶⁶Ibid., 239-240; Ibn al-^CAdīm, Zubda, I, 218-219.

⁶⁷Aristakes, Récit, 12.

⁶⁸The battle at Lake Palakac^Ci is mentioned by Aristakes, Récit, 13. The Georgian tradition (Sumbat, Zhizn' i izvestie o Bagratidakh, 162, and Histoire de la

Géorgie, I, 306-307, placed Gēorgi's route of retreat farther to the west. For the locations of Palakac^Cis and Shirimni see Honigmann, Ostgrenze, 162-163.

⁶⁹Yahyā, CSCO, 240.

⁷⁰Aristakes, Récit, 13.

⁷¹If true, Yahyā's statement, CSCO, 240, indicates that Basil II committed an atrocity which far surpassed his blinding of the 14,000-15,000 men of Tsar Samuel's army after the battle of Kleidion in 1014. However, Yahyā's actual statement is that "[Basil] blinded about 200,000 of [Gēorgi's] leading followers [min khawāss ashābihi]." Obviously, Gēorgi could not have had 200,000 leading followers; the number given is plainly exaggerated, but whether it was actually 200, 2000, or 20,000 or still another figure cannot be said. Aristakes, Récit, 14, calls attention to the seemingly infinite number of those blinded by Basil.

⁷²Aristakes, Récit, 13; also, Sumbat, Zhizn' i izvestie, 163; Histoire de la Géorgie, I, 163.

⁷³Yahyā, CSCO, 240; Sumbat, Zhizn' i izvestie, 163.

⁷⁴Yahyā, CSCO, 241.

⁷⁵The words of Skylitzes, Synopsis, 366, that "When Georgios, ruler of Abasgia, disregarded the agreements to the Byzantines and attacked the neighboring territory, the Emperor went out against him with the whole army" appear to indirectly confirm Yahyā. To what other agreements than those mentioned by Yahyā could Skylitzes be referring? But see Synopsis, 339. Perhaps, Skylitzes is simply the victim of his own confusion.

⁷⁶Yahyā, CSCO, 241-242; Skylitzes, Synopsis, 366-367.

⁷⁷Aristakes, Récit, 19.

⁷⁸Aristakes, Récit, 19, conflates King Senacherim and his son David into a single individual, David-Senacherim. Vardan Vardapet, Vseobshchaiia Istoriia, 116,

says that it was David who killed Xiphias. The same story is given by Matthew of Edessa, Chronicle, 59, but this tradition appears dubious as Yahyā, Skylitzes, and the Georgian Royal Annals (Histoire de la Géorgie, I, 307) all identify Nicephoros Xiphias as the murderer.

⁷⁹Aristakes, Récit, 20-21; see also 20, fn. 2 on P^Cers. Skylitzes, Synopsis, 367, and Sumbat, Zhizn' i izvestie, 165 (Histoire de la Géorgie, I, 308) take notice of the execution of P^Cers in punishment.

⁸⁰Yahyā, CSCO, 242.

⁸¹Aristakes, Récit, 18, 20.

⁸²Ibid., 21-22. Aristakes paraphrased Basil II's communication to Gēorgi as demanding the three fortresses which had belonged to the apanage of the Curopolates. This must be a reference to David and not Bagrat III, since it was from the will of the latter that Basil's claim as heir originated.

⁸³Yahyā, CSCO, 242; Skylitzes, Synopsis, 367. However, September 11 is, perhaps, too early. Yahyā says that Xiphias murdered his co-rebel Nicephoros Phocas August 15, 1022. According to Aristakes, Récit, 20, Basil and his army spent more than a month at Salk^Cora after leaving Mazdat where he had received the head of Phocas. Thus, the decisive battle between Gēorgi I and Basil II was probably fought later in the fall.

⁸⁴Aristakes, Récit, 23.

⁸⁵Sumbat, Zhizn' i izvestie, 166-168. The Georgian Royal Annals (Histoire de la Géorgie, I, 308) give a slightly different story. They cast the blame on some unnamed aznaurs, who suspected King Gēorgi of harboring pacific intentions toward the Byzantines. Yahyā b. Sa^Cīd accused Georgi's minister whose name he transcribes R.fādas. It is not clear whom Yahyā had in mind.

⁸⁶Aristakes, Récit, 23.

⁸⁷Aristakes, Récit, 19; Histoire de la Géorgie, I, 309; Sumbat, Zhizn' i izvestie, 168.

⁸⁸Honigmann, Ostgrenze, 165-166.

⁸⁹Sumbat, Zhizn' i izvestie, 168; Histoire de la Géorgie, I, 309; Aristakes, Récit, 23. Skylitzes, Synopsis, 367, says that Basil II bestowed the rank of magister on Bagrat. Yahyā, CSCO, 243, says that the agreement provided for Bagrat to remain as a hostage at the Byzantine court for only two years. However, Yahyā also inexplicably dates Basil's departure from Georgia in A.H. 414/March 26, 1023-March 15, 1024, which he says corresponded to the forty-eighth year of Basil's reign. That happened to be 1023. The Georgian sources and Aristakes, to the contrary, state that Bagrat remained a hostage at Constantinople three years and that he was allowed to return to Georgia just before Basil II's death. Also, the story Aristakes tells, Récit, 24-25 of how the winter snows severely afflicted the Byzantine army during its march through Vaspurakan would seem to depend on Basil's departure from Iberia in autumn of 1022. Thus, in this case, Yahyā seems to be mistaken.

⁹⁰Aristakes, Récit, 23-24.

⁹¹Ibid., 19; Yahyā, CSCO, 240-241.

⁹²Thomas Artsruni, Histoire des Ardzrouni, trans. M. Brosset, Collection d'Historiens Arméniens (St. Petersburg, 1874), I, 248.

⁹³On this point see N. Adontz, "Samuel l'Arménien, Roi des Bulgares", Académie Royale de Belgique, Mémoires, Classe des Lettres, 39 (1938), 16-17, 23, who points out Kedrenos' (that is, Skylitzes') tendency of grouping together under a single date events without regard to their chronological order. An example will suffice. Skylitzes, Synopsis, 339, reports that when the Curopolates David died, Basil II received the oath of Gēorgi, David's brother and the ruler of Inner Iberia, that he would not attack imperial lands. Having received Gēorgi's son as a hostage, Basil departed for Phoenicia (modern Lebanon). Skylitzes here has combined the events of 1000 and 1022. Basil II actually received the oath of Bagrat III, Gēorgi's father, in 1000. The son he took hostage was the

future Bagrat IV, who was interned at Constantinople, 1022-1025. Basil did not progress from Iberia to Phoenicia in 1000 but in the opposite direction, from Phoenicia to Iberia. Because of the doubtful reliability of Skylitzes for events on the eastern frontier, the argument developed by S. G. Agadzhanov and K. N. Iuzbashian, "K istorii Tiurkskikh nabegov na Armeniiu v XI v.", Palestinskii sbornik, 13 (1965), 151, according to which Senacherim actually agreed to cede Vaspurakan in 1016 (as Skylitzes maintains) but only surrendered the province in 1021 (as all the other sources claim) must be rejected. In any case, it is pure hypothesis, developed in agreement with their projection of the first Turkish attack on Armenia to 1016.

⁹⁴Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 46, says that Basil II informed the neighboring amirs of the Arabs to cease their attacks on Vaspurakan.

⁹⁵Samuel of Ani, Tables Chronologiques, Collection d'Historiens Arméniens, II, 443.

⁹⁶Agadzhanov and Iuzbashian, "K istorii Tiurkskikh nabegov", 151 and passim.

⁹⁷Matthew of Edessa (c. 1135), Chronicle, 53-55; Vardan Vardapet, (thirteenth century), Vseobshchaia istoriia, 122; Thomas Artsruni Continuatus (twelfth century), Histoire des Ardzrouni, 246. See C. Cahen, "À propos de quelques articles du Köprülü Armağanı", JA, 242 (1954), 276.

⁹⁸Aristakes, Récit, 19.

⁹⁹Asolik, Histoire Universelle, III, 38: 515, 42: 156. Elsewhere (III, 46: 168) Asolik refers to the Tājik amirs. Are Rawwādids, Marwānids or some other dynasty meant by this term?

¹⁰⁰Aristakes, Récit, 24.

¹⁰¹V. Minorsky, Studies in Caucasian History (London, 1953), 44, fn. 2: "For the years 369-420/979-1029 there is a blackout in the history of Azarbayjan."

¹⁰²For instance, Agadzhanov and Iuzbashian, "K istorii Tiurkskikh Nabegov", 152: "The concession of

Vaspurakan was the result of a definite policy, conducted by Byzantium in Transcaucasia, and the Turkish raids only made possible its realization." Also, Grousset, Histoire de l'Arménie, 553; V. Vardanian, Vaspurakanskoe Tsarstvo Artsrunidov (Erevan, 1969), 267 (Russian resume); E. Janssens, "Le lac de Van et la stratégie Byzantine", B, 42 (1972), 393-394; Akulian, Einverleibung, 35; Bartikian, "La conquête de l'Arménie", 333.

¹⁰³ Aristakes, Récit, 19; Matthew of Edessa, Chronicle, 50-53; Vardan Vardapet, Vseobshchaia istoria, 116; Thomas Artsruni, Histoire des Ardzrouni, 246; Samuel of Ani, Tables Chronologiques, 443.

¹⁰⁴ E. Janssens, "Le Lac de Van", 395, attributes to Vaspurakan an essentially static and defensive role: "In effect, [Lake Van] on the one hand and the mountains on the other form a natural citadel which should especially insure the protection of the country from an outside attack. . . [Vaspurakan] is also an ideal site for the armies of great powers desirous of finding a bridgehead effectively protected by nature to spread their influence and to curb the eventual reactions of the enemy." Also Akulian, Einverleibung, 48; Bartikian, "La conquête de l'Arménie", 333.

¹⁰⁵ Janssens, "le lac de Van", 394, disregards the contrast between Constantine Porphyrogenitos' silence concerning Vaspurakan's strategic value and the importance he attributes to Manzikert and the cities along the north shore of Lake Van: Akhlāt, Altzike, Archēsh, and Berkri. Constantine Porphyrogenitos, D.A.I. XLIV, 125-128. This silence, obviously, could indicate that Constantine VII and the Byzantines attached no strategic importance to Vaspurakan. In any case, Archesh and Berkri were only incorporated into the Empire after Vaspurakan--in 1024 and 1034--when the two cities were already surrounded by imperial territory. This leads one to question how much strategic considerations influenced Byzantine policy toward Armenia after the death of Constantine VII.

¹⁰⁶ Samuel of Ani, Tables Chronologiques, 443.

¹⁰⁷ Yahyā, CSCO, 240; Honigmann, Ostgrenze, 169.

¹⁰⁸ Samuel of Ani, Tables Chronologiques, 443.

¹⁰⁹ Yahyā, CSCO, 240.

¹¹⁰Thomas Artsruni, Histoire des Ardzrouni, 248; Skylitzes, Synopsis, 355; Vardan, Vseobshchaya istoriya, 116.

¹¹¹On the Armenian conception of kingship R. Kherumian, "Esquisse d'une feodalite oubliée", Vostan, 1 (1948-1949), 8, remarks 'For Agathangelos, for Faustus of Byzantium, for Koriwn the king. . .is only "the highest of the lords". . ."he who commands". . .of whom one speaks in simple and measured terms which would fit any warrior chieftain of the period.' Also C. Toumanoff, "Introduction to Christian Caucasian History, I, The Formative Centuries IVth-VIIIth", Traditio, 15 (1959), 86: "Their pride, more particularly pride of birth, their memories of common origin--natural Ebenbürtigkeit--with the Crown and of their anterior status as sovereigns, made it impossible for the princes to regard the King of Armenia as anything more than a primus inter pares." Although there is no comparable study on this subject for the period which concerns us here, the same conception of kingship presumably was prevalent in eleventh century Vaspurakan.

¹¹²It is interesting that the eighteenth century historian of Armenia, M. Chamchian, reached this same conclusion. In his History of Armenia, English trans., (Calcutta, 1827), II, 122, he wrote: "[Senacherim] , on the issue of this short war, began to think of the prediction of St. Nierses, and sending for the chiefs of the country and his own relations, proposed to them to make over Vaspurakan to the emperor Basilius, and to solicit in its stead Sebastia with its dependencies. All consenting, the king sent his son David to Constantinople as ambassador, to negotiate the exchange."

¹¹³Sovety i Rasskazy Kekavmena, ed. G. G. Litavrin, (Moscow, 1972), 283.

¹¹⁴Akulian, Einverleibung, 54, gives 1018 for the date of the death of Gagik I. Iuzbashian, "K khronologii Gagika I Bagratuni", 197, favors either 1016 or 1017. The traditionally accepted date--1020--is that given by Chamchian, History of Armenia, II, 106-107, English translation by J. Avdall.

¹¹⁵"Dwin", Er², II, 680 (M. Canard).

¹¹⁶Aristakes, Récit, 9-10.

¹¹⁷Matthew of Edessa, Chronicle, 8-11.

¹¹⁸Aristakes, Récit, 10-11; also Vardan Vardapet, Vseobshchaiia istoriia, 117.

¹¹⁹Iuzbashian, "K khronologii Gagika I Bagratuni", 198. See also fn. 114.

¹²⁰Canard, "Dwin", EI², II, 680, writes "The date of the Shaddādid capture of Dwin is without doubt 413/1022.

¹²¹Matthew of Edessa, Chronicle, 8-11.

¹²²Basil II's support of Ashot IV does not necessarily demonstrate that, as Akulian, Einverleibung, 56, claims "This passage indicates [andeutet] the original intention of the Emperor Basil II to smash the strength of the country by supporting internal disorders.

¹²³Aristakes, Récit, 15-16.

¹²⁴Skylitzes, Synopsis, 435; according to Akulian, Einverleibung, 57-58, who used the second edition of the chronicle of Matthew of Edessa (Valarshapat, 1898), John-Smbat gave aid to Phocas and Xiphias. However, nowhere in the translation by Dostourian of the Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa is it said that Phocas did any more than call on John-Smbat and his brother for assistance (p. 59). Matthew, 57, says that John-Smbat resolved to hand over Ani and Kars (which he did not possess) to Basil "since he was a cowardly person." According to Vardan Vardapet, Vseobshchaiia istoriia, 117, John-Smbat forswore his kingdom because of pressure from the Iberian kingdom.

¹²⁵Yahyā, CSCO, 244, places the fall of Archēsh in 415/March 15, 1024-March 3, 1025.

¹²⁶Histoire de la Géorgie, I, 309-310; Aristakes, Récit, 25; Yahyā, CSCO, 250.

¹²⁷See above Chapter 6 in the discussion of causation.

APPENDIX

Reference List of Arabic Chroniclers Consulted

<u>Chronicler</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Titles</u>	<u>Contemporaneity with the "Continuation" (938-1034)</u>
Al-Antākī: see Yahyā b. Sa ^c īd			
Al- ^c Azīmī, Muhammad b. ^c Alī	483-556+/1090-1161+	Mukhtaṣar Ta'rīkh al- ^c Azīmī	throughout
Al-Dhahabī, Shams al-Dīn	673-748/1274-1348	Ta'rīkh al-Islām	throughout
Eutychios (Sa ^c īd b. Bitrīq)	263-328/877-940	Nazm al-Jawhar	-326/938
Al-Hamadhānī, Muhammad b. ^c Abd al-Malik	d. 521/1127	Takmilā Ta'rīkh al-Tabarī	-357/968
Al-Hamawī, Muhammad b. ^c Alī	d. 735-739/1334-1339	Al-Ta'rīkh al-Mansūrī	throughout
Ibn al- ^c Adīm, Kamal al-Dīn	588-660/1192-1262	Zubdat al-Halab min Ta'rīkh Halab	throughout

Ibn al-Azraq, Ahmad b. Yūsuf	510-572/1116-1176	Ta'rīkh al-Farīqī	throughout
Ibn al-Dawādārī, Abū Bakr b. ^c Abdallāh	completed chronicle 736/1335	Kanz al-Durar wa Jāmi ^c al-Ghurar	throughout
Ibn al- ^c Ibrī (Bar Hebraeus)	1225-1286	Mukhtasar Ta'rīkh al-Duwal	throughout
Ibn al-Jawzī, ^c Abd al-Rahmān	510-597/1116-1200	Al-Muntazam fi Ta'rīkh al-Mulūk w'al-Umam	throughout
Ibn Muyassar, Muhammad b. Yūsuf	628-677/1231-1278	Akhbār Miṣr	extant for 362-365/ 971-976; 381-387/ 991-997
Ibn al-Qalānisī, Hamza b. Asad	465-555/1073-1160	Dhayl Ta'rīkh Dimashq	throughout
Ibn Sa ^c īd, ^c Alī b. Mūsā	610-685/1213-1286	Kitāb al-Muḡrib fī Hulā al-Maḡrib	-358/969
Ibn al-Sayrafī, Yahyā b. Muḥammad	463-542/1071-1147	Kitāb al-Ishāra ilā man nāla al-Wizāra	throughout
Ibn Zāfir, Jamāl al-Dīn	567-613/1175-1216	Akhbār al-Duwal al-Munqatī ^c a	throughout

Ibn Taghrībirdī, Abū al-Mahāsīn	812-874/1409-1470	Al-Nujūm al-Zāhira	throughout
Ibn Zūlāq, al-Ḥasan b. Ibrāhīm	306-387/919-997	Sirāt al-Mu ^c izz, etc.	-365/975? Possibly to 386/996
Al-Kindī, Muḥammad b. Yūsuf	283-360/896-971	Kitāb ^c Umarā' Mīsr	-335/946 (continued to 362/972)
Al-Maqrīzī, Aḥmad b. ^c Alī	766-845/1364-1422	Itti ^c āz al-Hunafā; al-Khitāṭ	throughout
Al-Mas ^c ūdī, ^c Alī b. al-Husayn	d. before 345/946	Murūj al-Dhahab	completed in 336/ 947-948
Michael of Tinnīs	after 1051	Continuator of Sāwīrus b. al-Muqaffa ^c	938 (?) - 1034
Miskawayh, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad	320/325-421/923/ 926-1030	Tajārib al-Umam	-369/979
Al-Musabbihī, Muḥammad b. Abī'l-Qāsim	366-420/977-1029	Akhbār Mīsr	-419/1028
Al-Rūdhrawarī, Abū Shujā ^c Muḥammad	437-488/1045-1095	Dhayl Tajārib al-Umam	369-389/979-999

Sāwīrus b. al-Muqaffa ^c	d. 979-1003	Ta'rīkh Bitārikat al-Kanīsat al-Misriyya	originator of the history
Sibt b. al-Jawzī	581/582-654/1185/ 1186-1256	Mir'āt al-Zamān	throughout
Al-Shimshātī, ^c Alī b. Muhammad	unknown	Akhbār al-Shām (?)	-394/1004
Thābit b. Sinān	-365/976	Ta'rīkh	-363(5?)/974(6?)
Yahyā b. Sa ^c īd al-Antakī	c. 370-c. 458/ c. 980+-c. 1066	Dhayl Nazm al-Jawhar	326-425/938-1034

ARABIC GLOSSARY

ᶜahd	an agreement
ahl al-dhimma	free non-Muslim subjects (coll. of dhimmī)
amān	protection, safety, safe conduct, quarter
amir (amīr)	prince
awqāf	pl. of waqf
ᶜayyārūn	vagabonds, rabble
dāᶜī	religious propagandist, missionary
dāᶜī al-duᶜāt	chief dāᶜī
dār al-ᶜilm	place of learning, literally, palace of knowledge
daᶜwa	mission, literally, call; propaganda
dhayl	continuation
dhimmī	free non-Muslim subject
dīnār	the standard gold coin
dirham	the standard silver coin
dīwān	administrative bureau, ministry
duᶜāt	pl. of dāᶜī
ghāzī	raider
ghilmān	pl. of ghulām
ghulām	a slave servant, often used in military employment

ḥadīth	the Muslim science of the Prophet's deeds, statements, and silent approval
ḥājib	chamberlain
hawānīt	pl. shops, esp. wineshops
imam (imām)	supreme leader of the Muslim community
iqtāʿ	feudal estate
jabal	mountain, mountains, hills
jihād	the Holy War
jizya	poll tax levied on ahl al-dhimma; sometimes used interchangeably with kharāj
ibn (abbrev.: b.)	son (of someone)
isnād	a chain of authorities
kharāj	land tax; sometimes used interchangeably with jizya
laqab	an honorific title
madhhab	doctrine, movement, school
maghāribā	pl. of maghribī
maghribī	one from the Magrib; north African
mahdī	"the guided one" whose coming will announce the end of the world
mālinkhūliyā	a melancholy
mamlūk	a slave (often in military employment)
mashāriqa	pl. of mashriqī
mashriqī	an Easterner, including Turks, Daylamites, etc.
mukhtaṣar	abridgement
mukūs	excise taxes

mulūkhiyya	a vegetable popular in Egypt
nisba	adjective expressing place of origin or tribal affiliation
qādī	judge
qā'id al-quwwād	commander in chief
qā'im	in Fātimid theology the final imam
qasīda	type of Arabic poem
rusūm	unjust taxes
thughūr	zone of fortresses built against the Byzantines in the Syrian and Mesopo- tamian marches
sīra	a biography
Shī ^C a	the party of ^C Alī, the Prophet's son- in-law
Shī ^C ī	an adherent of the Shī ^C a
Sunna	the record of the Prophet's deeds, ut- terances, and tacit approval
Sunni (Sunnī)	one who follows the Sunna
tadhkira	report
ta'rīkh	history
umma	the community of Muslim
vizir	a minister
wālī	governor
wālī ^C ahd	heir apparent, crown prince
waqf	religious endowment
wilāya	sovereignty, government, administrative jurisdiction under a wālī

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The sources and secondary literature used in the dissertation are listed separately. Medieval Arabic sources are listed by the author's nisba (e.g., Yahyā b. Sa^cīd is listed as al-Antākī) unless the name begins with "ibn" (i.e., "the son of") in which case it is listed under ibn plus the nisba. Arabic and Russian have been transliterated according to the Library of Congress system except that I have chosen to eliminate the supra-literal loops in transliterating Russian.

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